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# **A life of Saint Francis Xavier based on authentic sources**

**M. T. Kelly (Miss.)**

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Francisco

*(From a Picture in Rome)*

# **A LIFE OF SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER**

**Based on Authentic Sources**

**BY**

**M. T. KELLY**

**B. HERDER BOOK CO.**

**17 SOUTH BROADWAY, ST. LOUIS, MO.**

**AND**

**68 GREAT RUSSELL ST., LONDON, W. C.**

**1918**



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*Sti. Ludovici, die 9. Martii, 1918*

*✠ Joannes J. Glennon,  
Archiepiscopus  
Sti. Ludovici*

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***Joseph Gummersbach***

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**TO**  
**THE MEMORY OF MY TWO KIND UNCLES,**  
**BOTH JESUIT FATHERS.**

**"Whoso has felt the Spirit of the Highest  
Cannot confound nor doubt Him nor deny:  
Yea, with one voice, O world, tho' thou deniest  
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I."**

**F. W. H. MYERS**



## PREFACE

The story of the life of St. Francis Xavier is one of the most fascinating in the annals of the Church. To the romance of travel and danger, of immense voyages on unknown seas amid the remote continents and islands of the mysterious East, it adds the higher and no less vivid interest of enormous labors and conflicts amid incredible difficulties and privations for the extension of Christ's kingdom upon earth. The character revealed by it is in its natural aspects, one of the most brilliant, ardent and highly cultivated known to history and in its supernatural features one of most exalted sanctity and intimate union with God. It is thus a striking example of that combination of action and contemplation that constitutes the Apostolic life and that exemplifies most completely the character of the Divine Founder of the Church. Hence it has always been a favorite subject with all readers of religious literature. Even non-Catholic writers and religious leaders have expressed their amazement at the heroic sanctity and colossal labors of the Spanish religious. One of the most interesting monographs on the saint is a volume by the Secretary of a Protestant Missionary Society, intended to hold up the methods of the Apostle of the East to the imitation of foreign missionaries of the author's sect.

## PREFACE

Unfortunately no satisfactory popular life of St. Francis has been available in recent years. The old history of Bartoli and Maffei has long been out of print and the scholarly volumes of Father Coleridge are too formidable for the average reader.

Yet no period in the history of the Church would seem to have been more in need of such a work than the present. The flame of missionary zeal, long languishing, and in England and America scarcely kindled, has for some time been glowing more brightly. Catholic missions, recovering from the almost universal destruction consequent upon the French Revolution, have begun to flourish with new life. Young and vigorous missionary orders, like the Salesians of Dom Bosco, the Society of the Divine Word, our own Foreign Missionary Society of Maryknoll and many others have arisen, apparently from the soil, to swell the ranks and emulate the triumphs of the older religious bodies. Even in undisturbed conditions of society the necessity of vocations to the missionary career would be most pressing. But the present world war renders that demand infinitely more imperative. Hundreds, if not thousands of Catholic Missionaries in pagan lands have felt themselves compelled to abandon their chosen field and join the ranks of the warriors of their respective countries either as chaplains or as actual combatants. Many have been slain and their posts will know them no more. Their spiritual fields are untilled and desolate and the souls entrusted to their care or awaiting their call are wandering like sheep without a shepherd. Seminaries and

## PREFACE

preparatory schools are closed and the sources of necessary funds have dried up. After the close of the devastating conflict, the need of plentiful vocations to the missionary life and equally plentiful support will be felt as never before and it must be met if the missions are to survive. For this end nothing will prove so effective as to hold up to our noble-hearted young men the example of St. Francis Xavier, so inspiring in its sacrifices, conflicts and success. The exceptional timeliness of the present work cannot therefore be doubted.

Moreover, since the publication of the last English life of St. Francis Xavier extensive researches have been made by capable historians, many errors have been corrected and new facts of interest revealed. The *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu*, a collection of authentic documents published by the Society in Rome, furnishes a rich mine for the historical student. This and other sources have been utilized by Brou, Michel and especially the Belgian Father Clos in their copious biographies of the saint. Of these investigations the present volume makes full use.

That the work has been performed in a manner worthy of its subject is guaranteed by the established reputation of the authoress, Miss M. T. Kelly, and also by the fact that it has been undertaken at the suggestion and to some extent under the guidance of the Reverend Henry Browne, S.J., the distinguished Professor of Greek in the Irish Catholic University and President of the Irish Catholic Truth Society.

We may therefore in all confidence speed this little

## PREFACE

book on its way with the words used by St. Ignatius to Francis Xavier when sending him to India: "Go, inflame all hearts!"—inflame the world with the love of God and ardent desire for His holy service and the salvation of souls!

J. HAVENS RICHARDS, S.J.

New York, March 19th, 1918.

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# A LIFE OF SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER

## CHAPTER I

### EARLY YEARS

#### § I. PARENTAGE AND BIRTH

Spain, that bewitching land, which to know is to love, during the Middle Ages produced many renowned warriors, rulers, statesmen, explorers, writers, and poets, whose names are recorded upon the world's roll of honor. But in this region of ardent faith and devotion came forth as well a galaxy of Saints to increase the glory of our Mother the Catholic Church. Foremost in their ranks were two Basque nobles, now known to us as St. Ignatius Loyola and St. Francis Xavier,—one being the founder, the other as it were the co-founder, and in any case the greatest missionary, of the Society of Jesus.

Although the policy of “Los Reyes Católicos,” as their subjects called their truly great Queen Isabel of Castile and her far less great husband, Ferdinand of Aragon, had resulted in the consolidation of their states into one powerful monarchy, there still existed the semi-independent kingdom of Navarre lying be-

tween Aragon and the Pyrenees. The Navarrese were Basques, a people of perplexingly mysterious origin, and possessing a language quite unlike any other European tongue. They were a strange, proud race, jealously maintaining the ancient "fueros" or liberties under their own sovereigns, surrounded though they were by the mightier realms of France and Spain, both of which claimed suzerainty over them, so that there resulted frequent disturbances and fighting on the frontiers.

Prominent as an advocate and chancellor of the Basque exchequer, with periods of service as gentleman-in-waiting to the Prince of Viana, King John of Navarre's eldest son, was a learned doctor of jurisprudence in the University of Bologna, Don Juan de Jassu, or Yatsou. He belonged to a family of nobles who, by prudent marriages with rich heiresses of their own rank, and by important services rendered to the royal house of Navarre, had added estate to estate, until the family had become exceedingly wealthy for that period. Don Juan's parents lived in the stately fashion of the Spanish provincial nobility, who usually kept large households, including squires, gentlemen, chaplains, and an imposing retinue of servants and retainers, among whom there was always a place for poor young relations, who thus obtained shelter, food, and employment not so easily found elsewhere. Of these patriarchal families, very numerous in the Iberian peninsula, the ladies were usually good housewives, keeping careful watch that the expenditure should never exceed the income, which was mostly

paid in kind, such as tithes of corn, fish, meat, wine, fruit, and wool from the vassals and tenants of the estates.

The winter months were spent by many in Pampe-luna, the capital of Navarre, where the nobility inhabited their great stone "palacios." The rest of the year was passed in one or other of the family castles, situated in mountainous districts, where the chase afforded amusement, while for occupation there was the superintendence of farms and the administration of a rough and ready justice to retainers and peasants.

Faithful to the traditions of his house, Don Juan de Jassu married a rich heiress, Doña Maria de Azpilcueta y Javier (Xavier), the representative of two ancient and noble Navarrese houses. This lady, who was said to have been extremely handsome and of an excellent disposition, had five children, all very much older than her youngest son, who is the subject of this volume. The three eldest were girls. Madalena, a beautiful maiden most carefully educated by her parents, had been sent early to the Spanish court, where she was maid of honor to Queen Isabel. The Queen had a special liking for the Navarrese maiden, whose amiability and good sense equalled her loveliness. Notwithstanding many brilliant marriage offers, Madalena, with her parents' consent, left the court to assume the rough habit and follow the austere life of a Poor Clare in a convent at Gandia. Her two younger sisters espoused men of the same rank as their parents. Maria Periz de Jassu was married twelve years before the birth of her youngest brother. Miguel, the heir to

the Jassu properties, was given his father's surname according to Spanish custom, while his brother Juan took his mother's first name of Azpilcueta. It has been supposed that either he or Miguel, through the influence of their sister Madalena, became a royal page at Queen Isabel's court.<sup>1</sup>

When April sunshine and showers were sweeping across the smiling hills and vales of the Basque provinces, at the old fortified castle of Xavier,<sup>2</sup> not far

<sup>1</sup> Fita's *Boletín*, Sept., 1893.

<sup>2</sup> After the canonisation of St. Francis, although the castle of Xavier had been much devastated during the war between Spain and Navarre, a chapel was built on the north side and dedicated to the Saint. The castle of Xavier being greatly dilapidated, it was suggested in 1882, by the Bishop of Pampe-luna, that it should be restored with the assistance of the Jesuit Fathers, who might be able to have there a house of probation. Count de Guaqui, the owner, and his wife, Doña Maria Azlor de Aragon e Idiaquez, willingly offered to cede the lands and castle of Xavier, which they first restored themselves, and at the death of the Count de Guaqui, the work was continued by his widow, afterwards Duquesa de Villahermosa. As it was impossible to restore the castle to the condition in which it was originally built, only the living house was repaired, and care was taken to preserve the original aspect of the rooms, in which were left the souvenirs of St. Francis Xavier's abode there. As the chapel was too small, it was demolished, and a fine church replaced it, the steeple being very handsome. The porch has on either side an angel supporting the arms of Xavier, Jassu, Azpilcueta, and Atondo (the armorial bearings of our saint), while on the other are the arms of Villahermosa and the small shield of Azlor. The high altar is dedicated to the Apostle of the Indies, while the other two altars are those of St. Joseph and St. Michael. Scenes from the life of St. Francis Xavier are sculptured on the church façade, and between the heads of two heraldic lions is the following inscription: "A LA MAYOR HONGA Y GLORIA DE DIOS Y EN HONOR DE SAN FRANCISCO XAVIER MANDO







BIRTHPLACE OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER  
*(Before its Restoration)*

from the frontier of Aragon, Doña Maria Azpilcueta gave birth to the last of her six children, April 7th, 1506,—this date being entered in an old manual belonging to the second boy, Juan Azpilcueta, then nine years older than his infant brother.<sup>3</sup>

Although Francis was not a family name, the pious Don Juan de Jassu and his wife bestowed it upon their newborn child, probably in honor of St. Francis of Assisi, who was such a lover of Jesus crucified. The boy was also given the maternal surname of Xavier,—it being intended that he should inherit a portion of his mother's property. The child was baptised by a relation of Doña Maria, Don Miguel de Azpilcueta, Vicar

EDIFICAR ESTA IGLESIA LA DUQUESA DE VILLAHERMOSA AÑO MCM.  
ROGAD A DIOS POR LA FUNDADORA."

The church was consecrated June 19th, 1901, with much splendor, there being five bishops present, as well as seven grantees of Spain, the noble foundress, other Spanish nobles as deputations from neighboring localities, and the Fathers of the Society of Jesus with many secular priests. At present the castle of Xavier is inhabited by the sons of St. Ignatius. (L. Michel, S. J., *Vie de S. François Xavier*, Tournai, 1908, l. VI, ch. iii, pp. 319-522.)

<sup>3</sup> The room in which our Saint saw the light at the castle of Xavier is now unknown, for to prevent pilgrims invading the privacy of the castle a chapel was built, which was soon imagined to be Francis Xavier's birthplace, and being near the stables, this gave rise to the fable of his being born in a stable like Jesus Christ. There is a pretty story that, in 1610, one of the Xavier family, a pious young man, when dying in the room where St. Francis was born, suddenly saw the Saint beckoning him. Overjoyed at this vision, the dying boy exclaimed, "*Ya voy tio, esperè me,*" "I am coming, Uncle, wait for me." Hardly had the words crossed his lips, when he fell back dead. Cfr. L. M. Cros, S.J., *Saint François de Xavier, Son Pays, sa Famille, sa Vie. Documents Nouveaux*, I, Toulouse, 1894, ch. XII, p. 137.

of Xavier, in the parish church, where the stone font, even then very ancient, is still preserved in good condition. It is said that Francis' christening robe was suspended upon the church wall.<sup>4</sup>

Though there is a village in the Pyrenees where every one will point out the farmhouse in which St. Francis spent his infancy, the fact is he never left his mother's castle, where he was often seen in his nurse's arms by relations of the family. This castle was one of the oldest in Navarre. A massive fortification near the Arragonese frontier, it stood on rising ground at the side of a mountain, close to the fine stream of Aragon. This river fertilized the surrounding lands, which are of considerable extent and produced wheat, vines, and olive yards. Pasturage was abundant, game was plentiful, and there were also some profitable salt works. It was not a lonely place, for there was the little town of Sanguessa with its three religious houses of Friars Preachers, Friars Minor, and Discalced Carmelites. Moreover, just before St. Francis was born, Don Juan de Jassu and Doña Maria had generously endowed an *abbadia*, a sort of convent, in which resided their relative, the Vicar, with two prebendaries, an acolyte, and a sacristan or ecclesiastical student, who chanted the Divine Office in the parish church and sang mass every day.<sup>5</sup>

Within the stern grey walls of Xavier, the infant

<sup>4</sup> Cros, *Doc.*, p. 110; A. Brou, S.J., *St. François Xavier*, Paris, 1915, Vol. I, p. 9. Brou's is now regarded as the standard life of our Saint.

<sup>5</sup> Brou, Vol. I, pp. 10 sq.

Francis occupied much the position of an only child; his brothers, as was usual at that period, following the profession of arms in royal households or in those of the great nobles, while his married sisters lived in their own homes, their children probably being not much younger than their tiny uncle. Very dear the merry, sweet-tempered boy must have been to his parents and his devoted "tia Violanti," his mother's sister, a saintly maiden lady, who had taken care of her aged father, the Alcayde of Montreal, and after his death,—about 1503,—had come to live with her sister in the ancient castle, now lonely enough since the elder children had gone and the head of the family, Don Juan, was frequently either in attendance at court or engaged in the exchequer at Pampeluna.

## § 2. DEDICATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD

From his earliest years little Francis was carefully tended by these noble and pious ladies. From their lips he learnt to love and fear God, to avoid sin, and to observe purity of life and manners,—a thing too often neglected in those days of civil turmoil and warfare. Though according to the stern if wholesome discipline maintained among children of that period, Francis was taught to be hardy and active and to obey every order without a moment's hesitation, still his naturally affectionate disposition was never unduly repressed by capriciousness or unwise severity. His intelligent and lively mind doubtless gratified Don Juan de Jassu, who rejoiced to find how much his Benjamin resembled himself in his strong desire for knowledge.

Both he and his wife agreed that the third son so unexpectedly given to them should be devoted to the service of God in Holy Orders, in which (to judge from the early evidence of his brilliant ability) Francis would certainly rise to ecclesiastical eminence and reflect new honor upon the houses of Jassu and Xavier. In pursuance of this project, Francis received the tonsure whilst still a mere boy, and the good priests at the *abbadia* no doubt zealously aided his parents in educating him.

A very pretty description is given of the future Saint in his infancy by a relation, Martin de Azpilcueta, better known as the learned *Doctor Navarrus*.<sup>6</sup> He remarks that Francis was particularly loved and treated as their Benjamin by his parents. On account of his excellent disposition and graceful appearance, they were careful in bringing him up well and in giving him good masters at an early age. So well did he profit by their lessons, that he soon knew all a child could learn. There was not another boy like Francis, so pleasant, gentle, gay, and polite as he always was. His intelligence was really extraordinary, and he ever showed eagerness to learn and excel in everything suitable for an accomplished gentleman. Besides his own people, he charmed all who had never seen him before; a perilous gift, which however was safeguarded by a natural reserve and remarkable innocence of mind.

<sup>6</sup> Cros, *Doc.*, pp. 70, 242, 250 and the whole of ch. xxix; *Idem*, *Saint François de Xavier, sa Vie et ses Lettres*, Toulouse, 1900, Vol. I, p. 36; Arigita y Lasa, *El Doctor Navarro Martin de Azpilcueta y suas Obras*, Pampeluna, 1895.

During their visits Francis' brothers tried to induce him to follow their example by adopting the military career, which had brought renown and riches to their ancestors. But Francis refused, preferring to continue his studies, reminding them that their own father had distinguished himself, and had acquired both wealth and reputation, in the profession of jurisprudence.

The long enjoyed prosperity of the worthy family was now imperilled by the strife that broke out between the King of Navarre, aided by his ally, Louis XII of France, and the astute Ferdinand of Spain who had cast covetous eyes upon the small realm lying on his frontier. He had not scrupled to seize Pampeluna and occupy the surrounding country. Having found it impossible to detach Don Juan de Jassu from his allegiance to his sovereign, Ferdinand ordered the sale of the lands belonging to the house of Xavier, in 1515. This was also the year of Don Juan's death, which occurred October 16th, he having served the Navarrese king almost to his last breath.<sup>7</sup> Francis was only nine

<sup>7</sup> The date of Don Juan de Jassu's death is fixed by an old account, in which Juan Ramirez, mayordomo of the King and Queen of Navarre, testifies that the Doctor de Jassu, of the council of their Highnesses, served the whole year 1515, until he died in October; and that Juan Ramirez was commanded to pay whatever was due to him for his services, which accordingly was paid to his widow, Maria de Azpilcueta y Xavier. There is another document extant in which Maria acknowledges the receipt of the pension from the treasurer of Queen Juana the Mad, and the King, her son, later Emperor Charles V, due to her husband ("may he be in glory"); this document is signed, "Done in my house of Xabierr, the 15th of the month of January, 1517, the sorrowful or sad Maria d'Azpilcueta."

years old, says Father Cros, when he received his father's last embrace and blessing. Meanwhile his elder brothers, Miguel and Juan, remained faithful to their king, fighting beside the French troops for his restoration. Consequently their mother's castle of Xavier and the Torre de Azpilcueta were partially dismantled and her subjects harried by order of Cardinal Ximenes, then Viceroy and governor of Spain. Although Maria de Azpilcueta appealed to Charles V at Barcelona for redress and for the repayment of large sums advanced by her husband and her father to the crown of Navarre, she never received one farthing from the Spanish government. During the final struggles of the Navarrese against the supremacy of Spain, in the mountains of Guipuzcoa, Francis Xavier's brothers took such a prominent part, especially in the desperate defence of the fortress of Maya, that when Charles V granted a general amnesty, in 1523, their names were mentioned among the first of those against whom the sentence of death and confiscation of property were to be maintained. However, as the two brothers and their cousin de Jassu were strongly entrenched in the walled frontier town of Fuentarabbia, on the bank of the Bidassoa, the Spanish authorities were compelled to pardon them with a view to gaining possession of this place, which for two years had held out against their troops. The Jassus and their followers forced the Castilians to make a regular capitulation, in which not only the death sentences were reversed but the attainders removed, and the enjoyment of their es-

tates was guaranteed to them in return for the cession of Fuentarabbia.

It would seem from various documents that during these troublous times, the widowed Lady of Xavier remained in her half-wrecked castle with her youngest son, though it is possible that Francis may have spent a short time at the grammar school of Sanguessa. Here a house is still pointed out where he is said to have studied — as is also the Jassu palacio at Pampe-luna, where is shown the Saint's room, the alcove where he slept, and the board on which he is supposed to have placed his lamp to read and write before falling asleep or on waking in the early morning.

The terribly fallen fortunes of his family, the anxiety of his mother about the endangered lives of her elder sons, the worry of repeated lawsuits and acts of insubordination of vassals and tenants — all this along with the turbulent state of the country, must certainly have made a deep impression upon a mind so precocious and acute as that of Francis Xavier. In this hard school of adversity he doubtless acquired that ardor, that reliance on Providence, that readiness of resource in perils and difficulties, for which he was to be so distinguished in after years.

### § 3. DEPARTURE FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS

When the war was over, in 1525, the much-tried Doña Maria de Azpilcueta and her elder sons were able to settle the question of Francis' future career. His really brilliant abilities decided them, as he wished



to enter the Church, to send him to the University of Paris, then as always renowned for its faculty of theology.

Francis Xavier was now a well-grown, robust youth of nineteen, of an agreeable, sunny nature. Full of the Spanish idea of honor, and most anxious to gain a reputation for learning, he must have looked forward with keen delight to his approaching journey. But it was with a heavy heart that his poor mother parted from her youngest and most beloved son, attractive as he was even then in form and bearing. He had been with her in her hour of grief beside the deathbed of her husband, at a time when the latter's fidelity to his king was bringing poverty and distress on those dearest to him. When later Spanish sappers were demolishing the crenelated ramparts, portcullis, and drawbridge of the castle of Xavier, and Spanish soldiers were raiding villages, farms, and fields on the estates, Francis with his mother and his aunt Violanta witnessed the general devastation about them. When his valiant brothers — with a price set on their heads by the Spaniards — were making their heroic stand at Maya and Fuentarabbia, Doña Maria lived in daily dread of their death and had no comfort but in the warm affection of her dear Francis, who doubtless strove to console her and to anticipate her smallest wishes, especially in the matter of his studies. These, we may feel sure, she never permitted to be interrupted, knowing that he would probably have to earn his bread in the future. Often, no doubt, Francis knelt beside his mother in

the *abbadia* church or the castle chapel, praying for the safety of the gallant brothers who were fighting for their king and the ancient "fueros" of the Basque provinces. No wonder the mother's tears flowed as she embraced her last-born child, ere he, too, wended his way into the world, far removed from her loving care. Perhaps, also, she may have been oppressed by a dim presentiment that he would never again see her or the home of his childhood. If foreboding there were, it was destined to be realised by her death while Francis was in Paris, and later by his departure as missionary to the Far East, whence he never returned.

Probably in company of some clerics and other students going to Paris, Francis Xavier, in October, 1525,<sup>8</sup> rode away over the wild paths of the Pyrenees, across the dreary steppes of "Les Landes," through the deep lanes amidst stunted trees and hedges of the Vendean "Bocage," out on the fertile plains of Touraine, watered by the Loire and its many tributaries. Here the road to Paris ran, as does now the railway, upon the top of the great dyke constructed by ancient French monarchs to check the inundations of the river. At

<sup>8</sup> Father Cros differs from most of the biographers as to this date, founding his opinion on a notary's deed which he discovered in a bundle of papers preserved in the "Audencia" at Pampe-luna, drawn up between Francis and Johanot de Orbayceta, with the consent of his mother Doña Maria. It concerned the letting of half the mill at the hamlet of Roncesvalles, at the rent of so much wheat per annum. Dated February 1st, 1525, it conclusively proves that he had not yet left home, and that, although under age, he exercised his rights as to his child's portion from his parents. (Cros, *Vie*, I, ch. xviii.)

length the long journey came to its end, as Francis and his companions rode through the picturesque but grimy and malodorous streets of Paris, on their way to the Collège de Sainte-Barbe. This was situated in the region known as the "Preau des Clercs," near the Abbey of Sainte Geneviève, whence the University of Paris had formerly migrated. Its cradle had been in the "Parvis Notre Dame," under the shadow of the medieval cathedral, which has ever remained a haven of prayer and peace amid all the vicissitudes of storm, warfare, and dissension.

#### § 4. DESCRIPTION OF THE UNIVERSITY AT THE TIME OF FRANCIS

From an early date the schools of Paris, particularly the Bishop's school under the cloister of Notre Dame, had been much frequented by students. In the episcopal school were two classes: one for the children under the head cantor, the other for youths subject to the jurisdiction of the Chancellor of the Cathedral. So great however was the noise made by these classes in the cloisters, that the canons bitterly complained they were unable to chant the Divine Office in peace. Moreover, as the number of renowned professors enormously increased at the end of the twelfth century, the crowd of students became so great that it was impossible to remain within the narrow precincts of the Parvis Notre Dame. Therefore masters and scholars crossed the river to the hill on which lay the Abbey Ste. Geneviève, with its own school, where the celebrated Abélard had taught dialectics in the eleventh

century and given the impetus that was to render Paris, like Rome, the home of all mankind.\*

The exact date of the foundation of the University of Paris is unknown. Its beginnings may be traced to the reign of Louis the Young, king of France, somewhere about the middle of the ninth century. In a series of able articles in the *English Historical Review*,<sup>10</sup> the learned historian of the Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages says that the University of Paris, founded by the masters teaching on the isle Notre Dame, was distinctly an outgrowth of the Cathedral schools. A large part of Paris was soon inhabited by a crowd of students equalling the citizens in number, and King Philip Augustus ever showed the utmost favor to the University. It was he who enlarged and embellished the capital — now the centre of European thought and learning — by surrounding with a wall the narrow streets of wooden houses and towers, with their churches and monasteries, which continued to make up the city of Paris in early medieval days.

Encouraged by the Popes and the French kings, who granted privileges that rendered the new school as it were a republic within a monarchy — the University of Paris became a powerful factor in the political and literary history of the Middle Ages, although from its beginning to its dissolution by the Revolution in the 18th century, it always remained poor and subsisted chiefly upon the fees of its students.<sup>11</sup> There were

\* *Histoire Littéraire de la France par les Religieux Bénédictines de S. Maur*, Vol. IX.

<sup>10</sup> 1866.

<sup>11</sup> St. Victor says that it was impossible to assert positively

no special buildings set aside for the assemblies, which were held either in the church of St. Julien le Pauvre, or in that of the Mathurins. Nor were there any class rooms, but rooms were hired by the masters or regents in the houses where they lodged, or in those of other streets, particularly in the Rue de Fouarre, mentioned by Dante in his *Divina Commedia*.

Most of the students lodged with the citizens; while those too poor to do so obtained food and shelter in the numerous colleges which had been established and endowed by benefactors for "poor scholars." Among the founders of these were cardinals, bishops, ecclesiastics, kings and queens, religious orders, citizens of Paris, and rich merchants of several European countries which sent youths to the great University on the banks of the Seine. Most of the students had no means, and as is done at the present day in America, those who could not be received in colleges and hostels would in their spare moments act as paid servants to richer students.<sup>12</sup> We are told that the quarter of Paris in which the University lay was like a great school or novitiate of learning, with damp and gloomy courtyards, low vaulted rooms and halls strewn with

what were the funds of the University of Paris. It was certainly poor and proud of its poverty. Its chief resources were the taxes it had the right of imposing upon its members on extraordinary occasions, the fees payable on admission to the various degrees, and finally, at the end of the 15th century, a weekly contribution to the common fund of two half-pence from each member of the University. (*Tableau Pittoresque et Historique de Paris*, Vol. III.)

<sup>12</sup> We know that in his young days Cardinal Anchier Pantaleon, nephew of Pope Urban IV, maintained himself thus.

straw and hay for seats; the professor having his chair and table slightly raised above the level of the floor on which squatted the pupils. When in after life these students met in Rome, Jerusalem, or more frequently on the battle fields of England and France, they used to remark: "*Fuimus simul in Garlandia*," which was the name of a street in the Quartier Latin.<sup>13</sup>

The Spaniards had not been backward in studying at the University of Paris since the 14th century; and as they had not a college of their own, they were received into the Collège de Ste. Barbe and that of the Lombards. For the students were divided into four nations — *viz.*, those of Normandy, Picardy, Germany, and France,— and the Spaniards and other southerners were included in the last-named nation, where they formed a large and noisy tribe, remarkable for quarreling and every sort of uproar. At the colleges of the Lombards and of Ste. Barbe, where many learned Spaniards and Portuguese had acquired fame before the arrival of Francis Xavier, Greek had been studied. At least the students of Ste. Barbe, or "Barbists," were known to have attended the lectures of a Greek professor who taught at a neighboring college in the reign of Louis XI. At the beginning of the Renaissance movement, the Spanish professor Gelida replaced what was becoming an intolerable abuse of scholastic terminology by the study of pure Latin. Sainte Barbe was considered as a sort of branch or offshoot of the college of Navarre, having preparatory classes for the science of theology, which was cultivated in the larger

<sup>13</sup> *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, Vol. XXIV.

and richer college founded by Juana, Queen of Navarre (1304), who was the wife of the French King Philip the Fair.<sup>14</sup>

Into this world of science came Francis Xavier to enter as a student of the French nation. Before he could commence his course of logic, he passed a preliminary examination in grammar, rhetoric, and Greek. Then for three years he studied for the baccalaureate.<sup>15</sup>

The scholastic day began by the bell ringing at 4 o'clock in the morning, and the duty of rousing every one was entrusted to a student in the first class of philosophy, who lighted the candles on winter mornings. At 5 o'clock the students were seated on the floor of the class room. The regent or master gave the first lecture, lasting for the space of an hour, at the end of which everyone departed to hear Mass. The breakfast consisted of a roll of bread just out of the oven. From 8 to 10 was the great morning class,

<sup>14</sup> The College of Sainte Barbe owed its existence to Geoffrey Lenormant, who taught grammar at the College of Navarre, and who with his equally learned younger brother, Jean, had been rector of the University and employed upon its most important affairs. Both were principals of Sainte Barbe. (See Quicherat, *Histoire de Sainte-Barbe*, Paris, 1860-64, Vol. I, ch. i-ii.)

<sup>15</sup> The first academical degree was that of licentiate, which gave its recipient the right of teaching publicly; but after the 11th century this degree was preceded by that of bachelor of arts. The name of this degree proceeded from the ceremony of placing a stick or rod in the hand of a bachelor before he began his lectures, as a token of his receiving permission to do so. This rod being called "*bachillus*," it soon grew into a custom to call its holder "*bachelier*," now corrupted into "*bachelor*." (*Histoire Littéraire de la France*, Vol. IX.)

followed by exercises until 11 o'clock in the same place. At 11, masters and students of each college dined together in the refectory, the former having their own table and the students sitting at other tables, each presided over by the server of the week, with his napkin knotted round his throat. Though an hour was allotted to the meal, it consisted only of a dish of meat and some vegetables, while a chapter was read aloud from the Bible or from the lives of the saints. Grace was recited by the chaplain, who then read the names of the founders and benefactors of the college. The principal generally took this opportunity of administering reprimands and adjudging penalties. After dinner the students were questioned on the lectures they had heard. An hour's rest was allowed, during which were read aloud the works of some poet or orator,—“to prevent the devil finding idle minds” (Robert Goulet). From 3 to 5 were more classes, followed by an hour of exercises and repetition of what had been heard, and after supper, which was taken at 6 o'clock, there was yet another interrogation. Night prayers were said in the chapel, and curfew rang at 9, though the masters and students could obtain permission to study until 11 o'clock. On the recreation days (Tuesdays and Thursdays) after evening classes the students played games or walked in the “Prè aux Clercs,” a field on the left bank of the Seine below the city. The holy days of obligation were occupied by devotions and agreeable lessons on subjects outside the university programme. The vacation occurred during the month of September, while for three



months in summer, examinations and lectures in the higher faculties were suspended. Such was the existence of St. Francis Xavier during his student days, and while attending lectures at the various class rooms, he lodged, like most Spaniards, at the Collège Sainte-Barbe, an unpretentious but large building standing within its own enclosure where the modern Rue de Rheims is situated.

Several masters celebrated for their erudition taught at Sainte Barbe, among whom was the renowned Juan de Celaya, a Spanish "hidalgo," who had just finished his seven years as a professor when Francis Xavier arrived. So successful was Celaya as a professor that his lectures on philosophy were published and repeated in other colleges. However, he impaired his reputation by extravagant boasting and unfounded claims of relationship with various great nobles, including Prince Juan of Aragon, to whom he dedicated his works. But, as he returned to Valencia with his degree as doctor in 1524, Francis Xavier could not have attended Celaya's brilliant lectures.<sup>16</sup>

King John III of Portugal having founded burses at Sainte-Barbe for those of his subjects who were studying at the Paris University (1526), the distinguished Portuguese professor Joam de Govea was teaching at this college, of which he became the principal. This great scholar was remarkable for a zeal and energy that startled his colleagues and attracted the best lecturers and the most promising students,

<sup>16</sup> Quicherat, *Histoire de Sainte-Barbe*, Vol. I, ch. xiii, pp. 115-6.

thereby rendering Sainte-Barbe a nursery of great men.<sup>17</sup> His four nephews, all very learned, appear to have been lecturing about the same period as Francis Xavier. During what would now be called his undergraduate years Francis had for comrades several Spanish and Portuguese scholars, who in after life rose to distinction in their respective careers. Of these, Simon Rodriguez was one of the first with Xavier to join St. Ignatius. Two other students of that time may also be mentioned — Calvin, the future heresiarch of Geneva, and George Buchanan, the renowned Scotch historian and poet, tutor to James I.

#### § 5. XAVIER'S SUCCESS AT THE UNIVERSITY

In the colleges the students were divided into four divisions. First came the holders of burses, then, the "portioners" or youths entrusted by their parents at a fixed pension to the special care of the principals, who occupied much the same position as a modern head master. Next, the "camerists" or young men with private means, who studied under their own tutors and paid for their food and lodging, often having as their servants poor students earning their bread. The principal furnished these camerists with rooms and fuel for their cooking and allowed them to attend his classes, while the tutors having six or more pupils kept boarding houses for them, under the control of their respective principals. As for the externs or "martinets," they were almost independent, scarcely known to the principal, and only paying the masters whose

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. I, ch. xiv.

lectures they attended. Among this turbulent section of students were the "galoches" or superannuated scholars and amateurs, who made it the occupation of their lives to follow classes. Their nickname arose from the pattens they wore in winter to keep their feet dry in the muddy streets. The masters rather encouraged their attendance, being flattered by the presence of men, often white-haired, among the youthful students.

Francis Xavier lodged in a room at Sainte-Barbe with a holy and humble Savoyard, Peter Le Fèvre, (of whom more anon), and they passed together the examinations for the degrees of bachelor and licentiate. Though his family had fallen into reduced circumstances, it is likely that Francis, having the use of his small portion, was a "camerist," and he seems to have had as a kind of hanger-on or servant a certain Spanish student, Miguel de Navarre, of whom more will be told in the sequel.

With the impetuous ardor of his southern nature, Francis devoted himself to learning with such application and zeal that he soon acquired the chief sciences taught at the University. In his twenty-fifth year he graduated as master of arts, and on the 15th of March, 1530, he received his degree as licentiate in philosophy, and at the same time the patents of his noble lineage, which were witnessed and sent to him by his brothers.

For three years the brilliant Spanish licentiate as a master of the Collège de Beauvais lectured very successfully on philosophy, while studying his theology;

and his mind was full of ambitious dreams of the future that seemed so promising and bright. He knew he possessed genius and energy enough to raise himself to any dignity in life, and with the "punto d'onore" (point of honor) so peculiar to the Spaniard, he thought no labor too hard to secure the object of his ambition, which, even though excessive, had nothing in it of greed or meanness. The praises bestowed upon his lucid explanations and the popularity that attended Francis urged him on to greater efforts, and soon he was regarded as one of the most able lecturers in the University.

## CHAPTER II

### FOUNDATION OF THE JESUIT ORDER

#### § I. ARRIVAL OF IGNATIUS LOYOLA AT PARIS

Francis Xavier was at the zenith of his fame at the University of Paris, when, in the early spring of 1528, a poor Spanish scholar, leading an ass laden with some books and a scanty supply of raiment, travel-stained and wearied by the long journey on foot from Salamanca, entered the French capital and sought the "Quartier Latin." No longer a young man, and bearing evident marks of privation and hardship, this stranger re-studied grammar among the small boys at the Collège Montaigu; a proceeding which excited no comment, as elderly men were often seen among the students, as is still the case in China at the present day. When he had completed his course of grammar, he began to study philosophy at Sainte-Barbe. This grave man, with a decided limp — the result of a wound received at the siege of Pampeluna — having been robbed of his small store of money, was glad to be lodged as a "poor scholar" in the hospice of St. James, the patron saint of Spain. He paid the necessary fees for his course out of alms collected in Belgium and London during the vacations. This poorly clad student was Ignatius de Loyola, who had been formerly a noble and brave soldier, and greatly distinguished for his devotion to king and country, and was even now meditating the foundation of the Society of

Jesus. He could not have been long at the Paris University without hearing of and seeing his countryman, the brilliant Master of Arts, Francis Xavier, and one would think their first meeting must have been rather dramatic.

As at the Spanish universities, so in Paris, Ignatius, in the midst of his studies, continued his Apostolic work of converting the students about him. His custom of giving them religious conferences greatly provoked the ire of the masters. Jealousy of their own authority was aroused at the sight of an unknown man of little learning, who had but recently conned his grammar with the boys at Montaigu, and was not even a graduate, presuming to teach any subject, religious or secular, to his fellow-students. It was a clear case of "*imperium in imperio*," not to be tolerated in a university ruled by masters, whatever might be done at Bologna university, managed by students who engaged their own professors. Although by all accounts the Paris masters did not seem to have been much troubled at their turbulent scholars often sallying forth on "town and gown" brawls, or attacking rival colleges, yet they now affected to believe that the comparatively few sensible youths who preferred spending their leisure hours in Ignatius' company were thereby evading the lectures of their masters. One professor, Juan de Peña, laid a formal complaint before Govea, the principal of Sainte-Barbe, who already was much adverse to Ignatius giving spiritual exercises to his disciples, as he was not even a priest. Govea therefore determined to inflict the ordeal of a "public

scourging" upon Loyola. This disgraceful punishment was sometimes bestowed on refractory students who in the presence of their comrades in the refectory hall were compelled to run the gauntlet of a double row of masters vigorously wielding their canes upon the culprit's bare shoulders. A friendly warning was given to Ignatius of the fate so unjustly awaiting him. Bitter indeed must have been his mortification that he, a Spanish nobleman and soldier, who had brilliantly won his spurs on the battle field, should be subjected to such infamous treatment. Though he instantly subdued his natural resentment and would have patiently endured this awful humiliation; still with the practical common sense that distinguishes saints, Ignatius reflected that it was far more important not to be the cause of scandal to the youths under his direction, nor to be the means of his superiors committing a flagrant act of injustice. Therefore on the day he was summoned, he demanded an interview with Govea, in which he modestly explained his conduct. Call it magnetism, call it the hand of God,—that compulsive power radiating from his speech and eyes and personal presence conquered, as it so often conquered before and after.

Masters and students were awaiting the expected punishment in the hall. Doctor and culprit enter together; and before they can well ask themselves what it may mean, the Doctor is kneeling at the delinquent's feet. Before the whole concourse gathered to witness Ignatius's degradation, Govea implored his forgiveness. Angry Peña lay down with the lamb Ig-

natius and became his sincere friend. Teachers and pupils sought his company. The professor of theology, Martial, urged him to take the doctor's degree in theology without waiting to finish his course in philosophy.<sup>1</sup>

It would be interesting to know if Francis Xavier, who still kept his rooms at Sainte-Barbe, was present at this remarkable scene of Ignatius's rehabilitation. But nothing has ever been said about this, though it is known that Xavier gave his countryman some lessons at the Collège of Saint Remi, where he was then lecturing. He soon, however, turned his pupil over to his friend and room-mate, Peter Le Fèvre, who had been appointed by Peña to assist Ignatius in his studies.

Inflated as he was by his own success at the University of Paris, Francis Xavier did not conceal his contempt of the poverty and humility of Ignatius, ascribing both to a spirit of meanness, which he continually ridiculed. But Ignatius knew how to possess his soul in patience. The more he was repulsed and jeered at by Xavier, the more he sought to gain his affection, so as to be able later to acquire this youthful friend for the service of God. He knew that his innate virtue and genius rendered him capable of a better and higher life than anything offered by the world. Thus, with his marvellous knowledge of human nature, Ignatius ever strove to show his deep interest in everything that Xavier did, praising his lectures, procuring him pupils, and even assisting him with money. This naturally appealed to Xavier's noble disposition, and by

<sup>1</sup> Francis Thompson, *Saint Ignatius*, ch. iii, p. 70.



degrees he grew attached to Ignatius, whom he knew to be of as high rank as himself. No doubt he thought it a pity that Loyola should be so eccentric in his contempt of that worldly glory which at this period still dazzled Xavier's mind. The Lutherans were trying insidiously to spread their doctrines in France, and Ignatius warned Francis of this peril, thereby rendering him yet another service of the greatest importance.

The death of Xavier's mother, Doña Maria de Azpilcueta, in 1530, and the reduced income of his once wealthy family, of which he was but a poor cadet, made Francis more ready to listen to the call of God. Gradually he began to admire Ignatius and to ponder his advice. In the arguments they had together, nothing struck Francis more forcibly than Ignatius' frequent repetition of our Saviour's words, "What will it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul?"

"Don Francesco," said Ignatius, "if this life were the only one, if we lived merely to die and not to live for eternity, I should acknowledge myself vanquished by you. You are the wise man taking his ease to the utmost in this world, seeking what you have not got; I am the fool advising you to throw aside even that which you have. But if this brief span of life is no more than a passage to another immortal and everlasting existence, it is for you to measure them both, — the one with eternity, the other with time. By the proportion existing between a moment and an infinite number of centuries, you can understand the difference and see how necessary it is to provide for the one course or the other. You weary yourself striving for earthly

happiness, which is brittle as glass, whereas you are called to higher and more generous ideals. You have not yet obtained the happiness for which you toil. Why not labor for something worthy of paradise and which will last for eternity? You say paradise and eternity are not yet yours. But whoever wishes to gain them, must struggle for them. Once yours, who can deprive you of them? Worldly goods may fail in course of time, decay by use, or be lost through misfortune. Look at this world, which seems to you so great, and you will find that all the good you may discover in it is only a drop in comparison with the joys of eternity; all its beauty but a ray of feeble light before a sun of immortal and everlasting beauty. O Francis! you are wise, and I leave it to yourself to decide whether it be better to say now '*quid prodest*' to the things of this world, than to enjoy them at the risk of having to cry out that wretched '*quid profuit*' which will be heard for all eternity from miserable souls in hell." <sup>2</sup>

## § 2. EFFECT OF THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES UPON FRANCIS

Such were some of the reflections which were given to Francis as meditations; and God, who inspired Ignatius, also opened the mind and heart of Xavier to feel the truth of this Christian philosophy, which his

<sup>2</sup> "What hath pride profited us or what advantage hath the boasting of riches brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow, and like a post that runneth on." (Wisdom V, 8-9.)

friend and spiritual father taught him. Proving amenable to the call from God, realising the vanity of a worldly career and the importance of eternity, he soon gave himself to God and placed himself unreservedly under the guidance of Ignatius. In leisure moments Ignatius would take Francis aside and hold conversation with him on religious topics, while at a later period Francis was able to make the Retreat. He did so with great fervor, meanwhile taking no food for four days. He now began to practise severe exterior and interior austerities, such as haircloths and disciplines, the mortification of his own will and inclinations, and almost continual prayer.

This Retreat, in which Xavier made his first acquaintance with the Book of the Exercises, became the turning-point in his career. It was by the Exercises that Loyola founded his Society and intended that it should be regulated for all time. Thus do we find in them many references to the choice of a state of life; but they also constitute a compendious rule for prayer and religious discipline. A detailed description would not be in place here, but we must try to make clear to the reader what were the fundamental principles which henceforth governed Xavier's career.

The predominant idea in the Ignatian Exercises is the control of man's whole nature by faith and reason. At the outset, the disciple is invited to regard his life as a whole, to weigh its significance, and to exert his best efforts in order to bring his smallest actions into harmony with the Christian concept of human destiny. But this is not all. Such an appeal to reason might

have startled Xavier, but it could never have permanently transformed him. A man of his gifts and temperament could have been guided but not inspired by cold argument. As a matter of fact the Jesuit method of prayer and spirituality has been gravely misunderstood, just as the action of the Jesuit Order has been often grossly misrepresented.

What, then, is the real key to Xavier's submission to, and ultimate identification with Jesuitry, if we must so call it for want of a better term?

St. Ignatius was above all things a student of human nature; and he knew as well as any man that if he was to succeed in winning men, he must secure not merely the mind but the heart as well. The real appeal in the Exercises is to the heart, and through his heart was Xavier led captive. In the Spiritual Exercises the whole problem of human existence and duty is clearly stated, and proposed to be dealt with on military lines. This is made quite clear to the reader, and inasmuch as discipline is a most obvious thing in every army, it may be easily concluded that it is the only thing. Yet it is not upon matters of discipline that a successful leader of men places his chief reliance. A general must be feared, but, if he is to win battles, he must also be trusted, and (in supreme cases) loved. It is really strange how many can read the life and writings of St. Ignatius without realising that what he chiefly aimed at arousing was the affection, the loyalty, the enthusiasm of the soul, while also training it in the art of directing its emotions towards their highest object.

Xavier learned from Loyola to act according to reason, but he never thought that his Spanish friend was a cold and calculating person. He knew him to be not merely a confirmed mystic, but a full-blooded man of sympathetic temperament. It was only one like Xavier who could plumb the depth of his preceptor's nature. Nor was there in Xavier's eyes anything monstrous or inconsistent in a great leader of men stirring them to fight and at the same time training them as a legion of willing slaves to crush down any feelings which might interfere with the object of their highest enthusiasm. The principles of the Exercises cannot be rightly grasped by small and selfish natures. They are not intended for such. Like all great things, they can be and, indeed, have often been perverted by those who cannot rise to their sublimity. Ignatius, when he determined to approach the brilliant Parisian professor, was quite sure that he had made no mistake. As a matter of fact, humanly speaking, the Society became great in the founder's lifetime largely because of the life-work, and above all the example, of Francis Xavier. His career as a missionary was short, but quite long enough to justify the writing of the Exercises and the prescience of their author when he delivered them to his noble fellow-countryman.

### § 3. VOWS OF XAVIER AND THE EARLY JESUITS

On the feast of the Assumption, 1534, when the fresh breezes of a summer's morning blew over the steeples and towers of Paris, Ignatius with Xavier and five others crossed the river from the "Quartier





ST. FRANCIS TAKING HIS FIRST VOWS AS A JESUIT  
*(From a Painting by Galiardi)*

Latin " and, passing through tortuous streets, climbed the height of Montmartre to the crypt of an old basilica, where it was said St. Denis used to say mass and was executed. This crypt, situated under the martyr's chapel, was a favorite pilgrimage in the Middle Ages. The only priest of the little band, Peter Le Fèvre, celebrated mass, after which Ignatius and his sons made their first vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and, moreover, took an engagement to go on the mission to Jerusalem, or, should this prove impracticable, to accept any other mission imposed on them by the Vicar of Christ. Two years more were to be devoted to theological studies and to the hidden life of penance and prayer, while they agreed to renew their vows annually at Montmartre.

It has been stated that a revelation was made to a servant of God that Xavier's conversion was deeply resented not merely by the world, but also by the demons, who foresaw that he would be the means of saving innumerable souls even in distant countries. The first thing to happen was that the idea suggested itself to the Jassu family that it was a waste of money to keep Francis at the University with so little hope of gain in a worldly point of view. He was on the eve of being recalled, when his sister Doña Madalena, to whom we have already alluded, now Abbess of the convent of St. Clare de Gandia, wrote a letter warning her brother Don Miguel de Jassu not to recall Francesco, but rather to supply him with money to finish his theological studies, because Christ had chosen him to be his Apostle and a pillar of the Church. Being a



pious man, Don Miguel followed his sister's advice and gave up all interference with Francis' studies.<sup>3</sup>

On account of bad health and important business connected with his projected plans, Ignatius was obliged to return to Spain, in 1535, and desired his companions to meet him at Venice during the Lenten season of 1537. As he was to pass by the town of Obanos, where Francis's brother, Don Juan de Azpilcueta, was living, he took a letter to him from Xavier. In this letter Francis spoke of his poverty and asked his brother to send him a remittance, which could be given by Ignatius to the father of Laynez, one of his disciples, who was transmitting other sums to Paris to Spanish students, including his own son. It may seem strange that a nobleman like Francis should feel the pinch of poverty, but aware that he was a brilliant lecturer, his family probably thought he supported him-

<sup>3</sup> This letter of Doña Madalena was read by many people, some of whom deposed to it during the canonization process. It is, however, no longer in existence. This holy nun died about the time when her brother had given himself to God. It may be remarked here that in Spain the eldest son after his father's death always took his place as chief of the family, being regarded with respect and submission by the younger brothers and sisters. A curious instance of this custom is to be seen in the will of Francis Xavier's paternal grandmother, an heiress who, having the power to divide both her own and her husband's estates among their children, commanded her younger children to consider their elder brother (Francis's father) in the light of a true parent; while she strongly enjoined him, as representative of her deceased husband, to be ever upright and as careful of the welfare of his brethren as he would be of his own;—an injunction duly observed by Don Juan de Jassu (Cros).

self by his fees. The highroads of Europe were infested by robbers, and Xavier's brothers naturally were not disposed to risk the loss of money in transit. The youthful lecturer, moreover, was of a generous disposition and ready to assist poor students, especially Spaniards, as in the case of a certain Miguel de Navarre, who had been living at his expense, and was perhaps acting as his servant.<sup>4</sup>

That Francis did not blame his brothers, is evident from his remark as to the great distance between Paris and Obanos. In the courtly style of his day he wrote that he was sure that their silence proceeded from no want of affection and that they would have relieved his needs had they known of them. Francis then alluded to some false accusations made against him and Ignatius, telling his brother what a good friend Loyola had been to him, lending him money and warning him against the new heresy then appearing in France. He advised Don Juan to profit by Ignatius's conversation and counsel, which was as wise as it was charitable. Francis also related how he had vainly

<sup>4</sup>This man, seeing the influence exercised by Ignatius, and fearing Xavier would adopt his mode of life, which would deprive him (Miguel) of his income, besides bringing, as he deemed, dishonor upon the noble family of Jassu and Xavier, thought to safeguard his own interests and his patron's honor by secretly murdering Ignatius. The wicked project was averted in a most extraordinary way, for as Miguel crept up the staircase to the room where Ignatius was praying, he heard a loud voice crying: "Wretch, where goest thou, and what dost thou mean to do?" Terrified beyond conception, Miguel threw himself at the Saint's feet and confessed his evil intention, which Ignatius readily pardoned. (Brou, *St. François Xavier*, I, p. 64.)

travelled thirty miles from Paris in pursuit of a nephew who had fled from the University, begging Juan to let him know if the fugitive had arrived in Navarre, though he feared from what he knew of his character that he never would do any good.<sup>5</sup>

Not long before his departure for Venice, Xavier was offered a canonry and large revenues at Pampe-luna, where, surrounded by influential relations and friends, he could have led an easy and honorable life, until some bishopric should become vacant in Spain or Navarre. But he refused a proposal that formerly would have flattered his ambition. With eyes opened to the inanity of earthly fame, and with ears attentive to the voice of "the Spirit who breatheth where he will" (John III, 8), he hastened to tell Ignatius that he was ready to follow him on the mission to the Holy Land then contemplated.

#### § 4. DEPARTURE OF FRANCIS FOR ITALY

When the time for his journey to Italy arrived, Francis Xavier was on the point of taking his degree in theology. Preferring to fulfill his vow of obedience, he renounced the highly prized distinction without a moment's hesitation. War having broken out between the Emperor Charles V and Francis I of France, all Spaniards were expelled from Paris. Consequently Xavier and his religious brethren were obliged to quit the University even sooner than had been agreed.

<sup>5</sup> L. Pagès, *Lettres de Saint François Xavier*, Paris, 1855, Vol. I, ch. i.

On the feast of All Saints, 1536, they took their departure as poor pilgrims and began their long journey southward. Now may we picture to ourselves the once worldly Francis Xavier, no longer riding like a nobleman on horseback, but walking along the rough French roads in all kinds of weather, with his rosary round his throat, a satchel of books and papers on his back, wearing the garb of a poor ecclesiastical student, which concealed a severe penance he had prepared for himself. To atone for his love of athletic sports, especially jumping, in which he had formerly delighted to display his agility, he bound cords round his legs and arms. These in the course of the journey became so deeply imbedded in the flesh and produced such serious inflammation that a surgeon was called in. He declared the case to be hopeless. But Xavier's dismayed companions having prayed fervently for his recovery, the cords fell out during the night, the flesh healed rapidly, and the patient was soon able to take to the road again in perfect health.

The hours of the day were divided between meditation, prayer, the chanting of psalms and hymns, and conversation on religious topics. The three priests said mass every morning, at which the others received Holy Communion. On reaching the inn at night, and before leaving it next morning, they thanked God for His protection and prayed to be preserved from all perils. Although they had some money for absolute necessities, they lived so abstemiously that their meals seemed to be rather a strict fast than anything else. Passing through Lorraine, our pilgrims suffered much

from the heavy winter rains in the valleys and the snow storms in the mountains, which once compelled them to halt three days until the roads were again passable.

On another occasion they were stopped by French troops who however let them pass when a peasant, looking at the pilgrims, observed that it was quite evident they were only going to convert some other country. A meeting with the French army was another mischance, but in reply to the questions put to them they pleaded they were students from Paris going to visit the shrine of St. Nicholas, which indeed lay on their route. The pilgrims were often insulted by heretics, whose preachers used to challenge a discussion, which was accepted by them in the hope of opening the eyes of the people to their errors.

We transcribe a curious incident mentioned in Stewart Rose's biography of St. Ignatius. The pilgrims had reached a place about sixteen miles from Constance, where the minister, who had been the parish priest when he and his flock were Catholics, followed them into the inn, laughed at their chaplets, and challenged them to an argument. They accepted the defiance though very weary. Lainez opened the discussion. We may well suppose the astonishment of the ex-curé when he found what antagonists he had encountered in these poor and simple men. He interrupted the dispute by a proposal that they should adjourn to take supper together. The travellers however declined the invitation and supped alone. They renewed the discussion afterwards, but the pastor, ex-

cited by wine and the presence of a large auditory, at last argued himself into a passion, swore at his adversaries, and left the inn in a rage, threatening to have them put into prison. Some who were there told the Fathers what was in store for them, and advised them to leave the place immediately, but they thought it better to remain that night. Early next morning a man about thirty years of age, of tall stature and a fair countenance, so that some said he was an angel, came to the inn and made signs to the travellers to follow him (for he spoke only German which they could not understand). He led them ten miles across the country, where they could see no track, yet they were not impeded by the snow, which lay thick all around. When they reached the high road he left them.<sup>6</sup>

The long journey had occupied fifty-four days when, on the feast of the Epiphany, 1537, the pilgrims emerged from the snow-clad hills of Arqua on the low lying plain and reached the shore of the Adriatic sea. The weary road from distant Paris lay behind them, with its vicissitudes of weather, peril, and hardship, as the future Fathers of the Society of Jesus entered the rough bark which was to take them over the gleaming sea to the "Virgin City," then at the beginning of its decadence. Still immensely wealthy and luxurious, Venice was the only Italian town that had never known the horrors of sack and fire. At this period it was remarkable for its splendor, being

"The pleasant place of all festivity,  
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy."

<sup>6</sup> Rose, *Life of St. Ignatius*, ch. ii, pp. 210 sq.

Doubtless our pilgrims gazed in admiration at the strange city, apparently rising stark from the waters, as their boat gradually brought them nearer to the walls. Through them in a wide curving space flowed the "Canalazzo," or grand canal, bordered by exquisite palaces, churches, and abbeys, such as those of San Gregorio, La Carità, San Bartolommeo, and the hospice called the "Fondaco dei Tedeschi," then a comparatively new building. It is not recorded where our travellers landed, though it is known that they met with a tender welcome from St. Ignatius, who had arrived before them from Spain. Seeing they all were in need of rest, Ignatius decided they should remain for the present at Venice, and they betook themselves to the hospitals of the "Incurabili" and of San Giovanni e Paulo to attend the sick. The Incurabili, which is now a barrack, stands in the western district of the city, not far from the church of St. Sebastian, on a lagoon facing the Fusina canal. The first Fathers spent their time here as infirmarians, with the difference that, while attending their patients, they could also take care of their souls. They consoled those who were suffering, instructed those who were ignorant or had forgotten the precepts of religion, and prepared the dying for their passage out of this world. They undertook as well the charge of burying the dead. St. Francis Xavier, who seems to have had a special predilection for the sick, was stationed at the Incurabili, which was full of the worse and more lingering forms of disease. So dreadful was the sight of the poor sufferers that Francis, notwithstanding his ardent

compassion, often became ill while attending his patients. To overcome this very natural weakness, he sucked the matter out of a purulent ulcer, and from that time never again experienced the slightest repugnance or inconvenience in the care of the sick.

### § 5. XAVIER LEAVES VENICE FOR ROME

Ignatius now remained in Venice, but in the middle of Lent he sent his disciples to Rome to receive the blessing of the Pope and obtain his permission to undertake the contemplated journey to the Holy Land. Once more they travelled on foot, following the coast line to Ravenna. Some of the pilgrims nearly fainted for want of food, and all were so hungry that before entering the city they were glad to eat pine cones in a grove outside the gate. It is reported that Francis Xavier on this occasion said to one of his companions: "Do you remember the excessive abstinence we imposed on ourselves at Venice, not foreseeing how exhausted we should be today? Had I then strengthened myself by proper nourishment, I could have now dragged myself to the nearest place to beg alms for my poor brethren. In future I shall be more prudent."<sup>7</sup> But his supernatural thirst of mortification and penance soon made him forget this resolution.

In the Lives of the Saint we read how, at a later stage of the journey, our pilgrims, having no money to pay the ferryman for taking them over a swollen stream, gave him a pocket knife and an ink bottle. The spring had been more than usually stormy, the

<sup>7</sup> Michel, *Vie de S. François Xavier*, L. I, ch. iii, p. 45.



snows melting in the Apennines flooded the rivers and torrents, so that the travellers often waded up to their chests in water on the inundated roads and fields;—a hardship which, however, cured the inflamed leg of one of the company. Seeing the many acts of heroic mortification practised by Francis Xavier on this fatiguing journey, Simon Rodriguez, we are informed, was moved to tears at the sight of Master Francis, a man of noble family and a distinguished professor of the University going about the market-place at Ancona barefooted, begging from stall to stall for a cabbage or an apple.

Matters improved at Loreto, where the travellers were kindly received and kept for three days in a priory. They joyfully visited the shrine of the house of Nazareth, whose legend is known to the reader.

One hundred and forty miles from Rome, Xavier and his friends, entering the town of Tolentino, drenched by the rain, worn out by hunger and fatigue, could find no one in the streets to give them an alms wherewith to buy food and lodging. As they walked along, an unknown man approaching them silently put some money into the hand of the foremost pilgrim and disappeared into the darkness. Attributing this timely assistance to Divine Providence, the pilgrims went to the hospice, where they invited a few starving beggars to share their frugal meal of bread, wine, and figs.

Over the desolate and brown Campagna, stretching from the snowy peaks of the Sabine and Alban ranges to the low shore of the Mediterranean Sea, passing along the bank of the Tiber or by half-ruined aqueducts

and tombs, the pilgrims finally entered the Eternal City. In all ages those have been fascinated who have trodden this historic ground. The hospice of San Giacomo degli Spagnuoli received our travellers within its walls, where they were assisted by charitable Spaniards as poor countrymen. There was then in Rome an envoy of Charles V in the matter of the divorce of his aunt, Queen Katherine of Aragon, from Henry VIII, a certain Dr. Ortiz, who had been a regent or master at the Montaigu College in Paris. This divine had had a serious falling out with Ignatius respecting the adoption of a severe religious life by three Spanish students who for some time were under the Saint's direction.<sup>8</sup> He also, of course, knew Francis Xavier and some of his companions who had studied at Paris. He had probably long forgotten his quarrel with Ignatius, or if he still retained a recollection of it, it did not affect his conduct towards the Saint's disciples. He showed them every attention and took special care to mention them to Paul III, praising their virtues and learning, their love of souls and of poverty, which had urged them to seek the papal blessing with permission to preach the Gospel in the Holy Land. The Pope having said he would like to see them, Dr. Ortiz lost

<sup>8</sup> Strangely enough these three students, who were among Ignatius' first disciples, never joined his Society. De Castro of Toledo, Bachelor of Arts at the Sorbonne, returned to Spain to become a Carthusian. Peralta, on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, was met by an influential relation, who compelled him to go with him to Rome, where the Pope ordered Peralta to return to Spain. There he ended his life as a canon of the cathedral of Toledo. As for the third nothing is known of his fate.

no time presenting his friends; and Paul III did not know which was most to be admired — the modesty and self-possession of his visitors or the deep learning and acuteness of intellect they displayed in the discussion of questions put to them at dinner by a number of cardinals, bishops, and theologians. When the meal was over, the Pope called them to his side, saying he was rejoiced to see so much learning joined with so much humility and would willingly assist them. In reply to their petition for his blessing and leave to go to the Holy Land, the Pontiff readily gave the permission they sought, but did not think they would be able to get to Palestine. Although he did not tell them so, he knew that, owing to a league just formed by Charles V and the Venetian Republic against the Turks, the impending war would effectually bar the road.

#### § 6. MISSIONS IN ITALY

Peter Le Fèvre obtained papal leave for the ordination of his lay companions by any bishop, they having taken vows and being sufficiently learned. He also secured a dispensation for Alonzo Salmeron, that he might be ordained as soon as he reached his approaching twenty-third year. The pilgrims then returned to Venice with alms given them by the Pope and by some Spaniards; but the money was restored to the donors when the project was definitively abandoned. The journey north was free from the hardships they had endured going to Rome. They resumed their attendance on the sick at Venice until June, 1537, when they renewed their vows before the Legate Verallo, while

Ignatius and five of his disciples were ordained sub-deacons and deacons.

On the feast of St. John the Baptist Francis Xavier, with the others, had the happiness of being raised to the priesthood. This ceremony was performed by Msgr. Vincent Nigusanti, Bishop of Arba, who declared he had never beheld such intense fervor at any ordination. He perhaps little guessed that one of the men on whose heads his hands were placed for the transmission of priestly power was destined to be the most illustrious missionary since the days when SS. Paul and Barnabas were "separated for the work" by the Holy Ghost.

Now that the ordinations were over, it was necessary for the little band to come to some decision as to their future sphere of work. Finding that there was no chance of reaching Jerusalem that year, owing to the outbreak of the war between Venice and Turkey, Ignatius resolved to go to the Venetian possessions on the mainland, where he divided his brethren into small parties of two or three members, and sent them to Vicenza, Verona, and other neighboring towns. Each member was in his turn to act as superior for the term of a week, so that all might keep up the practice of obedience and self-renunciation.

The newly ordained Fathers were also to make a retreat in preparation for their first mass, after which they were to go on the mission in various Italian towns and villages, until the ensuing year, when they hoped to be able to proceed to Palestine. Should this Apostolic project not be feasible, they would continue the mis-

sions already begun in Italy. Francis Xavier and Alonso Salmeron spent forty days at Monfelicce, a little town about fourteen miles from Padua, at the base of the lovely Euganean hills, whence can be seen "a green sea, the waveless plain of Lombardy." Here they dwelt in a ruined cottage, which afforded them scant protection from rain or wind. They lay at night on the bare ground, observed the strictest fast, and passed their time in prayer and contemplation, going out once a day to beg a few crusts of bread from the neighbors.

Recalled with their other companions, they rejoined St. Ignatius, Le Fèvre, and Lainez, now living near the gate of Santa Cruz at Vicenza in a dilapidated and forsaken monastery, given them by the Friars of Santa Maria delle Grazie. In this building without doors or windows, but with a leaky roof, having a little straw for bedding and scanty food begged from house to house, St. Ignatius joyfully welcomed his sons, who said their first mass at Vicenza, whilst he, their founder, and Rodriguez deferred saying theirs until they should have had a longer preparation. The time and exact place of Xavier's first Mass are unknown.<sup>9</sup> His austere life and exposure to the weather in a wretched cell soon caused a severe illness, obliging him to go to the hospital of the Incurables, where he and a similarly afflicted companion were given one poor bed between them in a ruined outhouse. When one was in a burning heat, the other would be shivering, so that it was impossible to relieve both at the same time. They were, however, so much comforted by

<sup>9</sup> Brou, I, 60.



A vos misas. Despues que la Compaña se hubiere  
 dado y elegido el pueblo y ofructos prometidos  
 para siempre perpetua obediencia pobreza y castidad  
 y al padre mio in xpo charissimo hermano os ruego por ser  
 vuestro de Dios no menor que en mi abrenia vos por  
 mi presentes esta mi voluntad en los tres votos de re  
 ligion al pueblo que elovades por q desde agora para  
 el dia que se hiziere prometo de los guardar y por  
 el dia que se hiziere prometo de mi propia  
 que es verdad ape la parte firma y dada de mi propia  
 mano escrita. Aora anno 1580. a 15 de mayo  
 Francisco.

FORMULA OF ST. FRANCIS'S FIRST VOWS AS A JESUIT  
 (From the Saint's Autograph)

God that they paid little heed to their sufferings and hardships. One night, according to Rodriguez, Francis had a vision of St. Jerome, to whom he was devoted, and was told that he would be sent to Bologna, where he would find a cross that would give him as much suffering as merit. He was also told where the other Fathers would be stationed on the mission.<sup>10</sup>

During their residence at Vicenza, St. Ignatius desired his sons to answer all inquirers as to their state of life that they belonged to the "Compañia" or Society of Jesus.<sup>11</sup> This title is supposed to have been suggested to him when, living in the cave of Manresa, he was meditating on the celebrated chapter of the Two Standards in the Spiritual Exercises. Francis and Alonzo being restored to health, St. Ignatius took Lainez and Le Fèvre with him to Rome and directed the others to betake themselves to various places in Italy. They were to follow the same rules of religious life and to live in hospitals and on alms. At this time religion was at an extremely low ebb among people and clergy. Sermons were scarcely ever preached. It was considered a wonder to approach the Sacraments oftener than once a year, and no one entered the churches, except for the obligatory Sunday Mass, and even this was often neglected in periods of warfare and pestilence. Therefore missions such as St. Ignatius meant to give through his sons, were a necessary Apostolic work. Instead of living in a cloister and

<sup>10</sup> S. Rodriguez, *Comment. de Origine et Progressu Soc. Jesu*, p. 490.

<sup>11</sup> Polanco, *Vita S. Ign.*, p. 72.



wearing a religious habit, the Fathers wore the ordinary dress of the secular clergy of that day, poor and patched though it might be, and mixed freely with everybody in hospitals, on the streets, in houses, and on their journeys. These customs were of course looked upon as a strange and dangerous innovation upon ancient and established usages.

Nuncio Verallio had given them leave "to say mass, administer the Sacraments, preach, explain Scripture, and absolve from reserved cases within the Venetian States." <sup>12</sup>

Consequently they were quite prepared to carry out Ignatius' instructions to preach in the squares or piazzas, taking care to use simple language, while reminding their hearers of the different awards bestowed upon virtue and vice. They were to catechize children, instructing them in doctrine and morality; moreover, by all means in their power, they were to assist their neighbors, and above all they were to refuse payment for their services. As most of the Fathers, including Ignatius, spoke Italian badly, mixing Spanish idioms with it, the people sometimes thought they were "foreign jugglers or conjurers." But the spirit which animated their discourses, their earnestness, their charity, and the mute eloquence of their pale countenances surrounded them before long with patient listeners, and many were won to the faith.<sup>13</sup>

Francis Xavier and Bobadilla were stationed at

<sup>12</sup> H. J. Coleridge, *The Life and Letters of St. Francis Xavier*, London, 1872, Vol. I, ch. ii.

<sup>13</sup> S. Rose, *Life of St. Ignatius*, ch. ii.

Bologna, where there was a renowned university, second only to that of Paris. This mission was peculiarly suited to Xavier, familiar as he was with student life.<sup>14</sup> Bologna, the ancient Felsina of Etruscan days, according to Pliny, was one of the most important cities in the Middle Ages. Remarkable for their industry, love of learning and wealth, its citizens were proud people, jealous of their liberties, and barely tolerated the little more than nominal supremacy of the papal government in temporal matters. They maintained their own laws and finances, coined their own money, and never failed to expel any ambitious papal legate who attempted to interfere with their privileges. The city was situated on a well-watered and fertile plain, not far from the Apennines. The surrounding green hills gave additional charm to the scenery. The streets were wider than those of most other medieval towns, and the numerous piazzas, embellished by fine public and private buildings, teemed with life and color. Markets were continually held for the convenience of the large population, which was greatly augmented by the throngs of university students. Palaces, public edifices, libraries, churches, and cloisters abounded in

<sup>14</sup> The University of Bologna, the first founded in Italy, was noted for its faculty of canon and civil law, which became its most salient discipline, as theology was that of Paris and medicine that of Montpellier. Students came from all parts of the world to this University, which, in contradistinction to the one at Paris, founded by the masters, was managed by the students, who engaged the professors,—a democratic arrangement that suited the temperament of the Northern Italians, who were accustomed to republican methods of government (Florence, Genoa, Venice).

a city which was celebrated not merely as a seat of learning, but also for a certain refinement unusual at that period. As in our day, Bologna attracted the traveller's eye by its two leaning towers, built in the 12th century, which still retain the family names of their first owners, Asinelli and Garisenda; the latter is mentioned by Dante.<sup>15</sup>

Francis Xavier and Bobadilla lodged for some days in the public hospital. It happened that, as Francis was saying mass at the tomb of St. Dominic, in the Church of the Friars Preachers, his extraordinary fervor attracted the notice of a noble lady, a Dominican Tertiary, who had left Spain to end her days near the grave of St. Dominic. She made inquiries about the unknown Spanish priest, and accompanied by a Sister like herself, she went to the hospital where he was staying. So eloquently did he speak to them upon spiritual subjects that the lady's friend, Suor Isabella Casalini, told her uncle, a canon of San Petronio and parish priest of Santa Lucia, both Bolognese churches of all she had heard and begged him to take this saintly Spanish priest into his house.<sup>16</sup> The worthy canon readily agreed to this proposal, and while Francis

<sup>15</sup> *Qual pare a riguardar la Garisenda  
Sotto il chinato quando un nuvol vada  
Sovr' essa si ch'ella in contrario pende.*  
(*Inferno*, Canto 31, v. 137)

As seems the Garisenda to behold  
Beneath the leaning side, when goes a cloud  
Above it so that opposite it hangs:

(Longfellow's Trans.)

<sup>16</sup> H. Tursellini, *De Vita Fr. Xaverii*, Antwerp and Rome, 1596, L. I, ch. vii.

remained with him, Don Girolamo had ample opportunities of witnessing the penitential mode of life followed by his guest, who was always cheerful and joyous. The canon tried to persuade Francis to share his meals, instead of subsisting on crusts begged from door to door; but the Saint would never assent to this; nor did he accept Don Girolamo's advice not to overdo things in his missionary labors. After beginning the day by a long meditation and holy Mass, Francis and Bobadilla visited hospitals and prisons, where they attended to the sick and converted prisoners. They collected the children playing about the streets and catechized them. They heard the confessions of all who came to them and preached constantly in the piazzas and markets. Francis was in the habit of procuring a bench from the nearest house, on which he stood in the street and, waving his cap, beckoned to the passers-by, who soon stopped to hear what he had to say.<sup>17</sup> This unusual kind of preaching at first surprised and then attracted the people, who came in crowds to hear Xavier from his improvised open-air pulpit. In the fewest, yet most striking terms, notwithstanding his halting Italian, he reminded his hearers of the truths of religion, of the efficacy of the Sacraments, and above all of God's wonderful love for His creatures. No display of rhetoric or affected oratory was to be found in Xavier's sermons, but they were so full of divine grace that they forcibly appealed to the hearts of his hearers.

Francis must have gone among the students, too,

<sup>17</sup> Gonzalvez, quoted by Cros, *Vie*, Vol. I, p. 145.

perhaps visiting the University in the Strada San Donato, as well as the Spanish College built by Cardinal Albernoz (1364), where he could address his young countrymen in their own language. It must doubtless have interested him to see this fine college, its splendid double cloister, and the arms of Spain over the gateway through which Francis' own father had often passed when a student of law at the University.

The cross predicted by St. Jerome came in the shape of a severe ague, which did not, however, interrupt Francis' Apostolic life, for, although he suffered much, he did not relax any of his penitential exercises and actually redoubled his efforts on the mission. God restored him to health and increased the number of conversions wrought by his sermons and exhortations. Before he left Bologna it was usual to see people going to Communion every Sunday, and often several times during the week. The Bolognese, charmed by Francis' winning manners and profound charity, looked upon him as a saint, and deep was their regret when he was summoned by St. Ignatius to Rome (1538).

#### § 7. CONFIRMATION OF THE JESUIT ORDER BY PAUL III

So exhausted was Francis Xavier by his labors at Bologna and his subsequent journey on foot through the mountains, that, on reaching Rome, it was thought he would never be capable of sharing in the hard work now carried on by the other Fathers in the Eternal

City. But he soon showed that if his body was feeble, his energy and force of will were unimpaired. At first, according to Bartoli,<sup>18</sup> he was sent to preach at San Lorenzo in Damaso, which was not far from the Via Delfini, where St. Ignatius had his headquarters. Later, when Francis had regained his health, he preached at San Luigi dei Francesi, but as this church was rebuilt after the Saint's departure to India, no trace of his presence remains there. San Lorenzo, on the other hand, though spoilt by needless alterations, still retains the short nave and column existing in Francis' day, but the vaulted roof has been replaced by an ugly modern ceiling. St. Ignatius, Le Fèvre, and Lainez, who had been living near a vineyard at the foot of the Pincio in a poor house, now found it necessary to leave, as it was too small to lodge the other Fathers.

After a short residence near the church of San Bernadino, Ignatius removed to the Torre del Melangelo, or Orange tower, and an adjacent house belonging to Antonio Frangipani, supposed to be haunted by evil spirits. This building with its sculptured doorway, was in the Via Delfini, in the very heart of Rome, not far from St. Francesca Romana's convent of Tor di Specchi. The tower Melangelo is still to be seen by any one wandering about the narrow thoroughfares in that ancient quarter of the city. The house in which Francis Xavier occupied a room, is now modernised. This locality, being at that time densely

<sup>18</sup> D. Bartoli, *Dell' Istoria della Comp. di Gesù; L'Asia*, Rome, 1653-1660, L. I, n. 8.

populated, was well suited to Ignatius and his brethren, who thus could come into closer contact with the people whom they wished to reclaim. They were near the Church of Santa Maria di Monserrato, where St. Ignatius preached sermons, which, if short, were always to the point,— for he had a horror of those long and tedious discourses which so often weary people and lessen the impression which the truths of religion should produce on their minds.

In the neighborhood was also the ancient church of Santa Maria della Strada, with a greatly venerated picture of the Madonna, which after Xavier's departure to the East was given by Paul III to his friend Codacio, then a novice in the Society of Jesus. On the site of this church is now the Gesù, containing the tomb of St. Ignatius. The Pope being absent at Nice, where he vainly strove to reconcile Charles V and Francis I, the legate in charge of Rome gave Ignatius every faculty to preach and to hear confessions, so that Francis Xavier and the other Fathers were fully occupied during the day. In the evening they deliberated with St. Ignatius on the constitutions he was drawing up for the Society.

At this period a false accusation of heresy against Francis Xavier was made by an Augustinian friar who, himself a heretic in disguise, had been warned of his errors by Lainez and Salmeron. St. Ignatius demanded an inquiry, in which Francis' innocence was proved, and the vindictive Fra Agostino with his accomplices (including Miguel de Navarre, who still

resented the loss of his patron), were obliged to retract their calumnies and were expelled from Rome.<sup>19</sup>

This disagreeable occurrence was hardly over, when a famine broke out, during which the Fathers, particularly Francis Xavier, gave all they had to support the starving poor whom they collected in the streets. They were seen by many carrying on their shoulders those too weak to walk, to get them fed and clothed in their house, giving their mantles to their guests, washing their feet, and attending them in sickness. In this way Ignatius and his companions sheltered more than four hundred poor people from the biting winds of a Roman winter, which often rush across the Campagna from the peaks of the Sabine mountains. Such disinterested charity soon attracted notice, and the nobles began to send so much money and food that the Fathers were able to assist three thousand poor people until the next harvest, besides giving them religious instruction and inducing them to lead better lives in future. The population of Rome at that time was deeply affected

<sup>19</sup> It seems that Miguel de Navarre, when pardoned by Ignatius for his attempt to kill him, actually asked to be received as one of his disciples. But their pure and noble lives tallied so little with Miguel's own depravity, that he soon deserted them. Later he again tried to be readmitted at Venice, whither he had drifted, and was probably in distress, like most adventurers of his kind. Being refused, and taking it in great dudgeon, he seized the opportunity, when in Rome, to join Fra Agostino in vilifying St. Ignatius and his sons, which, while it lasted, must have been a serious cross to the missionaries conscious of their innocence, and especially to Francis Xavier, Navarre's former master. (Brou, I, 64 sq.)



with corruption and indifference. There were indeed zealous prelates and not a few saints. But worldliness, ambition and even gross scandals were frequently found among those who should have been models of virtue. In the midst of the general turpitude and irreligion the Fathers of Ignatius' Society exercised a vivifying influence by their Sunday sermons, their catechizing, their lectures at the Sapienza, and their assiduous hearing of confessions. Thus the fervent band succeeded in reviving religion among the people, who now came readily to the hitherto neglected Sacraments, while the secular and regular clergy, shaking off their apathy, joined in the good work, thereby considerably aiding the missionaries.

St. Ignatius said his first mass at Santa Maria Maggiore, on Christmas Day, at the altar which is believed to contain the manger in which our Saviour lay at Bethlehem. The saintly founder was much helped by the wise and prudent counsels of Francis Xavier respecting the rules and constitutions of the new institute, which were approved by Pope Paul III, on September 3, 1539.

This able and learned pontiff, aware of the abuses in morals, customs, and discipline prevalent in the reign of his immediate predecessors, had appointed a commission of six Cardinals and three bishops to deliberate on the reforms required in various departments of the papal government, notably those having regard to ecclesiastical discipline in the diocese of Rome. When Ignatius and his sons came to Rome,

the Pope soon perceived that in this new institute he would find powerful auxiliaries in his work of reform and in his opposition to the errors of Protestantism. Cardinal Contarini, a man in advance of his times in intellect and knowledge of human nature, remarkable for his simple, industrious, and austere life, became a steadfast friend of the new Society, taking St. Ignatius for his director with the remark, "This is the man I have always sought."

Thus, in the thirty-third year of his life, five years after taking his first vows, our Saint had the happiness of seeing the institute which he had chosen for life and death receive the highest sanction which human authority could impart.

## CHAPTER III

### CALLED TO THE FAR EAST

#### § I. REQUEST FROM THE KING OF PORTUGAL

The three years which Xavier devoted to mission work in Italy seem uneventful compared to what followed. Even before the papal approval had been given to the Society of Jesus, Ignatius had been asked to send his sons as missionaries to different parts of Italy. Now came a call to an Eastern mission, at a distance far exceeding that of the Holy Land, where he had first proposed to evangelise the infidels. This summons came from Portugal, through Dom Govea, the principal of Sainte-Barbe, who was now in Rome on business for the king of Portugal, John III.<sup>1</sup> Govea being now, as we have related, a sincere friend of St. Ignatius, took much interest in all he saw done in Rome by his former masters and pupils of the Paris University. Having been desired by his sovereign to procure some missionaries for the Portuguese possessions in the East, Govea thought he could not do better than to recommend the new Society of Jesus to his king, saying "that such men, learned, humble, charitable, inflamed with zeal, and indefatigable in labor, lovers of the cross, aiming solely at the increase of God's honor,

<sup>1</sup> Alban Butler, *Lives of the Saints*, Vol. XIII; Bartoli, S. J., *S. Francesco Saverio*, Vol. I, ch. v.

were fit to be sent as Apostles to the East Indies." \*

The King now wrote to his ambassador in Rome, Dom Pedro Mascarenhas, to obtain six of these holy men from the Pope. Paul III referred Dom Pedro to Ignatius, who replied that, as he had only ten members in his Society, he could not spare more than two for this important mission. He selected Simon Rodriguez, a noble Portuguese just returned from Siena, who went by sea to Lisbon. His destined companion, Bobadilla, was recalled from Naples, but, having fallen ill with sciatica in Rome, could not go further. The Portuguese ambassador was on the point of returning home, and asked Ignatius, who was then ill, to let another Father travel with him overland to Portugal. Ignatius called Francis Xavier to his bedside and said: "I had named Bobadilla for the Indies, but the Almighty has nominated you. I declare it to you from the Vicar of Jesus Christ. Receive an employment committed to your charge by His Holiness, and delivered by my mouth, as if it were conferred on you by our Blessed Saviour in person; and rejoice for your finding an opportunity to satisfy that fervent desire we all have of carrying the faith into remote countries. You have here not a narrow Palestine or a single province of Asia in prospect, but a vast extent of ground and innumerable kingdoms. An entire world is reserved for your endeavor, and nothing but so large a field is worthy of your courage and zeal. Go, my brother, where the voice of God has called you, where

\* D. Bouhours, *La Vie de St. François Xavier*, Paris, 1682, transl. by John Dryden, Bk. I.

the Holy See has sent you, and kindle those unknown nations with the flame that burns within you.”<sup>8</sup> Thus did St. Ignatius manifest the opinion which he had formed of Xavier, of his talents and his zeal for souls. In such a critical situation he used no reserve, but as it were unlocked to him the inmost recesses of his heart. Francis heard the words of his superior with amazement and joy. Doubtless he had long been aware of the prediction of his own sister, the nun, concerning his future Apostolate in the Far East. Moreover, it is believed that God had already revealed to him that he was to preach the Gospel in the Indies. Ever since his conversion Francis had secretly desired to devote himself to the spiritual welfare of the Hindu races, and so much was his mind occupied by this idea that he sometimes in his dreams beheld himself crossing oceans to wild countries full of savage people, where hardships and privations awaited him. Yet would he cry out in his sleep: “*Mas, mas, mas, Señor* (More, Lord, more)!”— words overheard by Rodriguez, who slept in Xavier’s room. Lainez, who travelled with Francis in Italy, was told by the Saint how he dreamt he had been carrying an Indian on his back until he was so tired that he could not raise his head. Thus it was no secret that Francis would gladly undertake the mission whenever it should please God to send him. As soon as Ignatius finished speaking, Francis replied: “Father, I am ready to start.” The Portuguese ambassador departing the next day, Francis went at once

<sup>8</sup> Bouhours-Dryden, *Life*, Bk. I.

to ask the blessing of the Pope, who spoke to him of the labors awaiting him in the East, where he should tread in the footsteps of the first Apostle of India, St. Thomas. He recommended Francis to revive the faith in those distant lands with the fervor that had animated his predecessor, and added that if he were destined to die like him, what better ending could there be of an Apostolic life than death by martyrdom? Francis humbly answered: "Holy Father, I discover nothing in myself that is worthy of such an important undertaking, but as it is the duty of subjects not to consider what they can do, but simply to obey the orders given to them, and being deeply conscious of my incompetence and shortcomings, all the greater is my confidence in the protection of Divine Providence, who is accustomed to choose the weakest instruments with which to carry out the work of God. Therefore no one can take glory to himself for anything that may be given him to do. Moreover, out of obedience to God I accept this post, hoping that by His grace I shall be able to fulfill with care and diligence that which your Holiness has commanded me to do in His name."

The Pope was so much impressed by the humble yet steadfast manner of Xavier, that he is said to have felt a presentiment that the man kneeling at his feet would do wonderful things for the glory of God. He tenderly embraced Francis and gave him his blessing. To Father Lainez, Francis gave a sealed paper, in which he declared his adhesion to all the constitutions

that might be enacted, and also his vote that Ignatius should be head of the Society, and after his death, Lainez.<sup>4</sup>

Francis then presented himself before Ignatius, who according to his custom of seeing that his sons were provided with everything needful, made Francis put on under his old cassock a flannel vest he himself was wearing, as some protection from' the cold when Xavier should be crossing the Alps. Both these great Saints being animated by the same zeal for the salvation of souls, there were not many farewells needed between them; and all that has come down to us are the words uttered by St. Ignatius as he dismissed St. Francis: "*Ite, omnia incendite et inflammate;*"—an injunction speedily fulfilled by his beloved son and friend. Ignatius also gave him a letter to his nephew at Loyola, in which he mentioned Xavier's mission to India, and desired that he and the Portuguese ambassador should be courteously and hospitably received.

Xavier's career in the East fell in with an epoch of activity and interest—the period when the Renaissance had to a great extent run its course and the so-called Reformation was already in progress. The year of his birth had been that of the death of Columbus (less than a decade after the discovery of the routes to India and America). That year was also important in the history of art, for it saw the commencement of the new St. Peter's Basilica under Bramante,

<sup>4</sup> *Monumenta Xaveriana* (first volume of the *Monumenta Historica Soc. Jesu*, in course of publication), pp. 811 sq. These papers are dated March 15, 1540.

and Michael Angelo was on the point of starting the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel. Only a few years before Xavier's meeting with Loyola in Paris, the two greatest painters of Italy, Da Vinci and Raphael, had died, Copernicus was completing his New Astronomy under the shadow of the Vatican, while Luther had already defied the Pope by publicly burning the "godless book of the papal decrees in Wittenberg." Thus Xavier's younger days had been lived in times of mighty upheaval and stern conflict. We should miss the secret of his great achievements for the Catholic cause if we isolated them from their natural setting and viewed them apart from the general trend of history. Christianity has always found its successes as well as its failures conditioned by its human environment.

Nor is it difficult to detect in the enterprises of the early Jesuits a strong influence from the movements and ideas of their astonishing contemporaries. When men's imaginations were stirred by a widening of their horizon, when the ordinary lust for gain was quickened and transfigured by the passion for seeing new hemispheres and, perchance, adding to the sum of human knowledge — is it any wonder that Sanctity should come forth from her hiding-places on the mountain and beside the river, and stalk abroad to see new peoples and conquer for Christ the new realms that men were talking about? The Church cannot change, but she can and does adapt herself to new conditions, and in the world of the Renaissance she found a new and exhilarating experience.

This was not merely an age of travel. The excite-



ment of the time was, on the whole, intellectual; and from no intellectual effort would the new order of missionaries shrink. Within its scope every sort of research, every kind of mental speculation should find a welcome, a home, an atmosphere of encouragement. Not, it is true, without subordination to the highest principles, for that we have seen was essential to the Jesuit scheme of activity. Nothing is to be omitted, but everything must be done for God's glory. Xavier would have to approach and try to influence the cultured kings of the East, men of a subtly critical and refined disposition; and we can understand how suitable for such a mission was the long course of study he had gone through at the University of Paris, which was in his days the centre of scholastic learning.

But if we would detect the deepest effect of the spirit of his age upon Xavier's character, we shall find it in that intense and concentrated energy which he brought to bear upon the objects of his mission. It was thoroughness which brought Columbus to his ultimate triumph. It was thoroughness which produced, at first in Italy, and afterwards elsewhere, those grand masterpieces of art at which the world has never ceased to marvel. The will to succeed is the unvarying characteristic of sinners as well as saints when great events are happening and great achievements done. This concentration will explain Xavier's career, and also his devotion to Loyola, from whom he first learned the lesson: "If thine eye be single, thy whole body will be full of light."

## § 2. DEPARTURE FOR PORTUGAL

On the 5th of March, 1540, Francis Xavier, with only his crucifix, breviary, and another book, rode away from Rome in the train of Dom Pedro Mascarenhas on the first stage of his travel, the journey to Lisbon, which took about three months. Visiting the shrine of Loreto on the way, Francis spent three days at Bologna, where he was warmly greeted by the citizens, who had not forgotten him nor his Apostolic work among them. Here, on Wednesday of Easter week, Francis began the long series of letters to Ignatius which have been preserved by the Society. He acknowledged the receipt of letters from Ignatius, saying what pleasure it had given him to read them. "Believing as I do that we shall only meet again by means of letters in this world, reserving our meeting face to face and our warm embraces for the future life, let us write often to each other. As you have recommended, I will write often, taking care to use separate sheets according to your instructions."<sup>5</sup> Xavier then described his visit to Cardinal "Ibrea," as he spelt the

<sup>5</sup> Father Cros draws attention to this passage, of which he says a wrong version was made by the first translator and copied by all the biographers. St. Ignatius only meant that matters foreign to the chief subject of the letter or requiring secrecy were to be written on separate sheets of paper. This opinion is also maintained in the edition of the letters published at Madrid in the *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu*, 1899-1900, where in a foot-note we are informed that the word "*hijuela*" has no reference to the word "little girl" (used by Father Coleridge in his life of the saint), but merely to the separate sheets of paper on which private matters were to be written.

name. The prelate received him very kindly, offered to assist the Society as much as he could, and, on taking leave, embraced Francis, who, kneeling, kissed his hands in the name of his brethren. The ambassador was very good to him and with many of his people went to confession on Palm Sunday, receiving Holy Communion at the Mass which Xavier offered in the Holy House at Loreto. Dom Pedro's chaplain wished to go to India with Francis. The letter ended by a kind message to Madonna Faustina Ancolina, promising to pray for her son Vincentio, a friend of his, who had been killed; and he begged of her and her husband to pardon their son's murderers because Vincentio was praying much for them. In this simple letter<sup>6</sup> Francis' affectionate nature betrays itself in every line. While at Bologna he lodged with his friend, Don Girolamo Casalini and said Mass in the church of Santa Lucia. At a later period this church was given to the Jesuit Fathers, when they established themselves in the old university city. On his departure with the ambassador, Francis was followed by a weeping crowd, whom he blessed and asked to pray that they might all meet in heaven, since it was unlikely they would ever meet again in this world.<sup>7</sup>

No more pleasant or more agreeable travelling companion could be found than Francis Xavier. If he thought a servant was tired, he instantly dismounted and gave him his horse, while he walked a considerable distance himself. At the inns he was ready to

<sup>6</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, pp. 208-10; Brou, I, 83.

<sup>7</sup> Rose, *Life of St. Ignatius*, ch. vii, p. 290.

help everyone, even to rubbing down the horses and saddling them the next morning. He would often give the room and bed assigned to him to some exhausted guest, or to some one who grumbled at being badly lodged, while he himself would lie on the bare ground or on any wretched couch which no one else would take. He gave few hours to sleep, so as to have more time for prayer and serving his neighbors. The fatigue of the long journey and the various incidents on the road could never divert his mind from God, and the thought that he was now actually on the way to India so increased his fervor that he continually offered himself to God, making the most ardent acts of love.

During the hours spent on horseback or on foot, Francis was always ready to converse cheerfully with his fellow travellers, treating them as his superiors and brethren with the utmost kindness and affability. Though he joined in conversation on indifferent topics, yet, mindful of Ignatius' practice and instruction, he contrived to introduce some allusion to spiritual matters with so much tact that his companions listened willingly to all he said about God and holy things. When there was a halt, it often happened that they would ask him to hear their confessions. Several incidents on the road served to display our hero's charity. There was a rude courier who, when reproved for disobeying orders, began swearing under his breath. Though he could hear him perfectly, Francis at the time paid no attention, so as not to provoke the angry man further. The next day, knowing that an accident had befallen the courier, Francis went in search of

him and found him badly bruised at the bottom of a ravine. "Wretched creature," exclaimed Xavier, "what would have become of thee if thou hadst died of this fall?" The man expressed contrition, and the Saint, helping him out of the ravine, mounted him on his own horse and brought him to the inn, where they were to remain for the night.<sup>8</sup>

On another occasion a young gentleman of the suite, fording a deep river, was swept away for half a mile. Thinking he must be drowned, the ambassador, who loved him, wept, while the others loudly prayed that God would save their comrade. Francis silently betook himself to prayer, and in a few minutes the youth and his horse, both much exhausted, came to the surface and were dragged ashore. Though Xavier was aware that this youth had resisted a religious vocation, he asked him what he had thought of at the moment of supreme peril. The lad replied that he had felt deep remorse at having neglected the call of God, which far exceeded the terror he felt at the idea of his approaching death. Francis told Ignatius that the youth spoke to them all about the pangs of the next world as if he had already experienced them, saying that those who did not prepare for death during life, would have no time, when the hour arrived, to turn their thoughts towards God. His discourse made a great impression upon the company, to whose prayers Xavier humbly ascribed the rescue of this lad. This opinion was not, however, shared by the ambassador or his people, who admired Francis Xavier's sanctity.

<sup>8</sup> Tursellini, L. I, ch. ix.

While crossing the Alps, Francis, at the risk of his life, saved the ambassador's secretary, who had stumbled over a crag and remained suspended by his garments above an abyss.\* Nearly all the biographers repeat how Francis, passing near Pampeluna, refused to visit his mother at the castle of Xavier, saying they would meet in heaven. However, his mother had died long before, and the castle of Xavier was not on the road to Portugal.<sup>10</sup> Still, observes Father Cros, it may be that perhaps at Bayonne Francis might have preceded his fellow travellers by taking a shorter route through the Pyrenees to Xavier; or his brothers might have met him at Loyola, which is more probable. But there is a tradition among the peasants of Xavier about a hill, which they call "the rock of the servant of God," where they maintain that the Saint, when going to India, halted to look for the last time at his birth-place, with the village and the church of his baptism lying afar in the distance.

Those who think that holy people are cold and unaffectionate towards their own flesh and blood are woefully astray in their estimate. No one has put the principle of true detachment more clearly than Ignatius in the Summary of his Constitutions. He says that it is necessary for the members of his Order to convert mere carnal affection into spiritual love, but he nowhere hints that it should be atrophied or weakened. Those who try to realise how intense the spiritual ardor of a nature like Xavier's becomes when purified by

\* Tursellini, *l. c.*

<sup>10</sup> Brou, I, 87.

suffering and strengthened by prayer, will obtain some insight into the love such a one is capable of feeling towards those who, besides being the children of God, are also his own kith and kin. Think of Christ weeping over Jerusalem and of Monica over her son, Augustine.

### § 3. ARRIVAL AT LISBON

The highlands of central Spain had not yet been reduced to parched aridity by the fierce sunshine of a Spanish summer, when the Portuguese ambassador rode across them to the frontier of his native land, reaching Lisbon at the end of June. Entering the city, Francis Xavier took leave of Dom Pedro Mascarenhas, and, according to his invariable habit, proceeded through the steep winding streets to lodge in the hospital of Ognisanti, where he found the Father of the Society who had preceded him by sea. Father Rodriguez's joy at seeing his companion again, chased away an impending attack of quartan ague, which troubled him no more. Francis and Rodriguez were soon summoned to the royal palace, where King John III and his queen, Catherine of Austria, received them most kindly, kept them over an hour alone with them, and sent for their children to introduce them to the visitors. The royal couple inquired about the new Society, its foundation, its rule of life, and the persecution it had endured in Rome. The King requested the Fathers to hear the confessions of the royal pages and to look after their religious instruction. The monarch also remarked that if young people of their rank

were accustomed from early youth to know and serve God, they would in later years be much esteemed as virtuous men, and give a good example and bring to pass a much needed reformation of manners in Portugal. These remarks were appreciated by Francis and duly transmitted to Ignatius, to whom he expressed his delight at the pious disposition of the King, who seemed most willing to help the Society of Jesus by every means in his power. Francis added that many efforts were being made to keep him and his companion in Portugal, where their friends thought they could do more good hearing confessions, giving retreats, preaching sermons, and exhorting the people to approach the Sacraments. The King's confessor and the court preacher advised him to detain the missionaries at Lisbon. Others, however, advocated the Indian mission, saying that, by their experience of those distant countries, they knew that the natives could be easily converted if instructed by men like Francis Xavier. These persons told him that if he and his brethren maintained their frugal life, their indifference to riches and other worldly advantages, they would in a few years bring two or three native States into the true fold, as the people would believe the teaching of missionaries who sought only the salvation of souls.

During the nine months Francis spent in Portugal he was much occupied searching for priests to aid him on his Eastern mission, and some proposed to go with him, though eventually he started with only two companions. The King offered the Fathers rooms in his



palace, but they continued to lodge at the hospital. Overwhelmed by their labors, often obliged to preach and to care for prisoners of the Inquisition, Francis and Rodriguez sorrowfully gave up their cherished habit of begging their daily food and accepted the provisions sent them by the King, which, however, they freely shared with the poor. So many courtiers were converted that Francis told Ignatius the court had become like a religious community, and confessions were so numerous that all day and part of the night were often passed by them in the confessional. There was indeed more than work enough to occupy twice as many of the Society, could they be despatched to Portugal.<sup>11</sup>

Francis begged St. Ignatius to send the book of the Exercises to the king, who would be much pleased, as he wished for a copy. His Majesty was so favorably inclined towards the Society that it was likely a college would soon be founded for the Fathers at the University of Coimbra, and as people were quite ready to build houses for them, there would be no trouble in establishing colleges if only there were sufficient members of the institute to conduct them. Indeed, the great popularity of the Fathers rendered Francis uneasy, as he remarked that "persecution was more desirable, being a much surer mark of Christ's disciples."<sup>12</sup>

An uncle of Francis, Don Martin de Azpilcueta, better known as *Doctor Navarrus*, a celebrated professor of theology and canon law at Coimbra, was anxious to see his nephew. Francis instantly wrote

<sup>11</sup> Dryden, Bk. II.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, Bk. I.

him two letters, saying how glad he would be to meet him and to satisfy all his inquiries about the Society of Jesus. However, want of time on both sides prevented the proposed meeting.

King John, seeing the wonderful improvement wrought at his court and among his subjects by the energetic sons of Ignatius, grew most eager that they should not leave the country. Although his brother, the Cardinal Dom Henry, told him that the Fathers were bound to go to India, having been sent there by the Pope, the King persisted in his wish to keep them. Terribly dismayed, Xavier and Rodriguez at once appealed to Ignatius to decide what should be done. After much consideration and an interview with Paul III, who left the decision to Loyola, the latter wrote that Rodriguez should remain at Lisbon, while Xavier should proceed as soon as possible to India,—an arrangement accepted by the King to the intense relief of Francis.

The Portuguese monarch who showed such zeal in religious matters was one of the best sovereigns that ever ruled in Europe, although his strong personality was overshadowed by Charles V, Henry VIII, and Paul III, who figured far more prominently on the stage of the 16th century. John III married Catherine, a sister of Charles V, while later his own sister, the Infanta Isabel, was wedded to the Emperor, and, as a result of this double alliance, Spain ceded to Portugal the Molucca islands, which were to be evangelised by Francis Xavier. We already know how the King appealed to the Pope for missionaries for his Indian

colonies, where he was aware that great laxity of religion and morals prevailed. Foreign missions always attracted the King's attention, which was ably seconded by the sons of St. Ignatius in India and Brazil. He endowed houses for them in both countries as well as at Lisbon, Coimbra, and in other parts of Portugal.

John also sent secular priests and bishops to hasten the spread of Christianity among the pagans in the colonies, and to convert the corrupt Portuguese settlers at Goa and elsewhere in the East. The character of such a noble-minded sovereign could not but excite the admiration and esteem of Xavier, who was ever kindly treated by him. Satisfied by the concession that Rodriguez should be left at Lisbon in charge of several novices who had joined the Society, John did all he could to further Xavier's departure. He gave him four briefs obtained from the Pope, constituting him papal nuncio and Apostolic legate in the East, with faculties to preach the Gospel, to instruct pagans, to reconcile heretics, and to grant dispensations. Two of the Bulls were addressed to the Emperor of Ethiopia and all Indian princes, recommending the missionaries to their favorable notice.<sup>18</sup> The King ordered that everything necessary should be provided for Francis on board the *Santiago*, the vessel that was conveying the Viceroy Martin de Sousa to Goa. The royal purveyors, however, could only induce Xavier to accept a coarse habit and a few books that would be useful on

<sup>18</sup> A. Astrain, *Hist. de la Comp. de Jesús*, Vol. I, Madrid, 1902, p. 467.

his mission. When the Conde de Castenera urged him to take at least one servant, he replied that, as through God's mercy he was able to make use of his own hands and feet, there was no need to employ those of another person. To the objection that as Apostolic legate he was entitled to have one servant, if not more, Xavier gravely replied that attention to the supposed requirements of rank and dignity had done little good to the republic of Jesus Christ, and that for his part he was determined to shrink from no manual labor either for himself or for his fellow travellers. He intended to make himself generally useful to every one, while careful to give no scandal or imperil his authority among his companions.

In his final audience King John asked the Saint to write to him about the conversion of souls, particularly those of the Portuguese colonists, whose lamentable condition grieved him. In his last letter to Ignatius before sailing, Francis praised the zeal of His Majesty for the honor of Jesus Christ and the salvation of souls, which made him (Francis) render thanks to God for a king imbued by such good and pious sentiments; and he prayed that God might grant John a long life, since he so well knew how to employ it, and was "*utilis et necessarius populo suo.*"<sup>14</sup> Francis also told Ignatius that the King meant to build a college for the Society at Evora, and that he desired more Fathers should be sent to help Master Simon (Rodriguez) in his work. Francis wrote to Fathers Le Jay and

<sup>14</sup> *Monumenta Xaveriana*, Epist. IX, Vol. I, Fasc. II, p. 240; Brou, I, 104.

Lainez, expressing his delight at the approval of the Society, just published in Rome. He asked his friends to write him letters which, as they could be sent only once a year, should be lengthy enough to take eight days in reading, full of all the news of the Society and his brethren.<sup>15</sup>

On the morning of his departure (April 7, 1541) Francis said Mass in the chapel of Our Lady of Nazareth. While he was thus engaged, two gentlemen were fighting a duel nearby. One having fallen badly wounded, a man ran to find a priest, and meeting Francis as he came down from the altar, asked him to assist the dying man. The Apostle hurried to the spot and heard his confession, but when it came to the question of pardoning his opponent, the gentleman refused, exclaiming he would rather go to hell. "But," asked Francis, "would you not forgive him if God gave you back your life?" Much surprised, the young man answered that he would then forgive his enemy. Francis lifted his eyes in ardent prayer that this poor sinner might be restored to health and not incur the loss of his immortal soul. Knowing that God had heard him, Francis turned and assured the wounded man that he would not die. The gentleman, struck by the earnestness of the Saint, promptly forgave his enemy and found himself cured as the Apostle had promised.<sup>16</sup>

Father Rodriguez escorted Xavier to the ship, and while bidding him farewell, Francis told him the reason

<sup>15</sup> *Mon. Xav.*—Coleridge, ch. iii, p. 68.

<sup>16</sup> Michel, *Vie*, L. I, ch. iv, p. 81; Cros, *Vie*, Vol. I, p. 190.

Rodriguez had once overheard him crying out in sleep, "More, more." It arose from the joy he felt in the wish of suffering which our Lord had implanted in his heart. Having spent nine months in Portugal, Francis Xavier embarked on Thursday of Passion Week, which was his thirty-fifth birthday, with the Italian Father Paul Camerino and a Portuguese brother not yet ordained, Francis Mansilhas, of whom we shall hear more later.

Down the broad and stately Tagus the East Indian fleet sailed into the Atlantic Ocean. Gradually the Portuguese coastline faded from sight, and with joyous mind Francis began the long journey to the East, whither God was sending him to convert thousands of souls and to bring the light of the Gospel to many ignorant minds.

#### § 4. VOYAGE TO INDIA

In the life of St. Francis Xavier by an ancient biographer a chapter is devoted to the description of the annual voyage from Lisbon to India during the 15th and 16th centuries.<sup>17</sup> The fleet consisting of four or five ships — caravels as they were called — took out soldiers and ammunition to the East, while on the return journey a valuable cargo of pepper, spices, and other precious merchandise was brought back to be sold in Europe. These voyages usually occupied sixteen months going and returning, including four months on the Indian coast, loading cargo. The only stop made on the voyage out (4,000 miles) was at

<sup>17</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, Vol. I, Fasc. I.

the Portuguese settlement at Mozambique, an island off the East African coast. The tedium of the journey was augmented by the miserable accommodations on board the vessels, which were constructed more for conveying cargoes than passengers. Accustomed, as people then were, to live on land without the least idea of comfort, yet far worse were the conditions of a life on board ship. So much space had to be allotted to barrels of water, provisions and other goods, that ordinary passengers were obliged to content themselves with a very small part of the large and clumsy vessel. Day and night they would be exposed to the heat of the tropical sun or to violent storms, or when the Portuguese navigators took a circle southward on reaching the Cape of Good Hope, to bitter winds blowing from the Antarctic Pole. As for the nobles and gentlemen, their cabins were so narrow and low that they could hardly turn round in them. The salted food, the weevily biscuit, the brackish water, frequently caused scurvy with all its terrible results. Then there were the dead calms off the Guinea coast, when there was no wind to fill the sails of the huge caravels, which would lie inert often from twenty to forty days. In our period of swift-going liners it is impossible to realise the intense sufferings of medieval travellers thus detained upon or near the Equator. When, in consequence of the delay, fresh water grew scarce and almost putrid, the horrors of burning thirst were added to the hardships, and sickness often prostrated more than three-

quarters of the crew and passengers. Besides these personal privations were the perils of cyclones, dense fogs during which no reckoning could be taken, shipwrecks on reefs or shoals, as well as the risk of fire. Worst of all were the pirates, especially the French corsairs, who preyed upon Portuguese shipping. So great were the perils of a long voyage under such circumstances that they roused the recklessness and brutality of the hordes of adventurers who were mixed with the soldiers, sailors, merchants, and officials on board the Indian fleets.

There were 1,000 men on the *Santiago*, which conveyed the Viceroy Martin Alfonso de Sousa to Goa. In the midst of these rough, ignorant men, addicted to gambling, swearing and quarrelling, Francis Xavier, notwithstanding the sea-sickness which he suffered for two whole months, devoted himself to the welfare of his fellow passengers. He accepted a cabin only to turn it into an infirmary for the sick, while a corner of the deck with a coil of rope for a pillow served as his couch at night. He declined to eat at the Viceroy's table, contenting himself with such scanty food as he could beg at random from any one who would spare him a little. The scurvy and other diseases breaking out gave him ample opportunities of nursing the sick and preparing the dying for their last hour. He then took the provisions allotted him by the Viceroy so that he could divide them among his half-starved patients. In a letter to St. Ignatius he writes that he preached regularly every Sunday at



the foot of the mainmast, besides hearing the confessions of the many men he met while "traversing the kingdom of the fishes."<sup>18</sup>

He also instructed the ignorant sailors, who had forgotten what little religious knowledge they had ever possessed. A witness of their bad lives, Francis showed the greatest charity and tact in trying to check evil by "making himself all things to all men." When he found that the more harmless amusements he wished to introduce were scorned by the graceless crew and passengers, who preferred the excitement of dicing and card-playing, he would attend their games, so as by his presence to stop their quarrels and swearing. He would pleasantly discuss their losses and gains with these coarse and violent men, even offering to hold the cards of any one who might be called away. Naturally refined, possessing a keen and noble mind stored with learning, Francis moved among his rough acquaintances as though he had never known any better society. To the sailors he talked of their seafaring life, to soldiers of their campaigns, to merchants of their commercial interests. Whenever he had time to converse with the Viceroy and his gentlemen, he would take part in their political discussions or discourses on religious or secular topics with sympathy and interest. So gay, cheerful, and obliging was Francis that he attracted even the most brutal and hardened men, who felt pleasure in listening to his exhortations, which were invariably given at the right moment for the amendment of their lives. By degrees he put

<sup>18</sup> *Mon. Xaver.*, Ep. II, XII, Vol. I, Fasc. I.

down the use of bad language and gambling, settled all disputes with as much discretion as common sense, and soon was so beloved that he was called "the holy Father"—a name (also given him later by Mohammedans and pagans) by which he was known to the end of his life. He told Ignatius that it had been a consolation to know that the governor and the gentlemen of the fleet believed that his desires were different from those of the world and tended to please God alone. So great indeed were the labors and pains to be undertaken that he could never of himself have been able to face them a single day. Therefore he thanked God who had given him the knowledge of his own weakness and the strength to do his duty.<sup>19</sup>

Thus we can already see how deeply the lessons which were expressed by Ignatius in his Spiritual Exercises had sunk into the soul of his disciple. The reader will remember that the fundamental principle of the Exercises is to regulate one's whole life and conduct by the simple rule: "*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam.*" Nothing else is to count. How magnificent had Xavier become by applying that simple standard!

After a tedious voyage, the East Indian fleet reached Mozambique at the end of August; and so great was the mortality from scurvy and pestilential illnesses that the Viceroy decided to winter at this settlement. By disembarking the crew and passengers from the filthy and infected vessels it was hoped that the number of deaths would decrease, but unfortunately Mozambique

<sup>19</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, Vol. I, Ep. II, Fasc. III.

was found to be very unhealthy, and more died there than on the voyage.

With the help of his two companions Francis, though himself suffering from fever and fatigue, cared for the sick, catechised children and ignorant adults, preached every Sunday to the Viceroy and large congregations, heard confessions, assisted the dying, and gave to them the plenary indulgences granted to him as Apostolic Nuncio by the Pope. It is related that one day the doctor found Francis in high fever hard at work among his patients and ordered him to go at once to bed. But Francis humbly begged to defer this to the next night, as he was attending a man who had not yet repented of his bad life. He had the dying sailor placed in his own bed, where the latter recovered consciousness sufficiently to repent and receive the last Sacraments before his death. Francis then followed the medical treatment, which must have been most drastic, to judge from his apologies to Ignatius for writing such a short letter because he had just been bled for the seventh time and was very weak. It was observed that whenever Francis was delirious, his mind ceased to wander if any one spoke to him on spiritual subjects. Indeed, "Master Francis was always contented, and no matter what might be his sufferings, they never could alter his joyous nature."<sup>20</sup> At the request of the Viceroy, who was also ill, the still feeble Francis accompanied him to India, starting on March 15th. Father Paul de Camérino and Mansilhas were left behind to look after the sick who were unable to sail.

<sup>20</sup> Michel, L. II, p. 87-88.

Sousa took a better and lighter vessel than the caravel in which he had sailed from Lisbon. It appears that, hearing a remark that the *Santiago* was really the best vessel in the fleet, Francis said that this ship would come to a disastrous end. His prediction was verified some months later, when the *Santiago* was wrecked off the coast of Salsette with its cargo, though the crew escaped. This fact was communicated to St. Ignatius in the twelfth letter he received from Francis.

On the road to India a few days were spent at Melinde, a Mohammedan seaport on the African coast, north of Mozambique. This town was in a charming locality, on a fertile plain, covered by palms, fruit trees, and well tilled fields and gardens. The people, nearly all negroes, were on good terms with the Portuguese traders, bartering their produce for European wares. Francis went ashore and was much affected by the sight of crosses over tombs in the Portuguese cemetery. On his knees he prayed at the foot of the largest cross for the conversion of the natives, to whom he spoke of the true faith, but with no success, owing to the intense bigotry that is still so distinctive of the followers of the false prophet.

The island of Socotora, off Arabia, was next visited, and here Francis found that there existed among the inhabitants a curious religion, which was a medley of Mohammedanism and Nestorianism (introduced by Christians from Abyssinia), combined with the Jewish practice of circumcision. Francis wrote Ignatius that some of the men and women bore names of Apostles and that of the Blessed Virgin Mary. They proudly

called themselves good Christians. Though the sacrament of Baptism seemed to be unknown or forgotten, the people venerated their crucifixes, before which lamps were kept burning in the churches, and these crucifixes were always plentifully anointed with butter. They also observed two severe Lents, lasting two months each. During these periods they lived on vegetables and dates, out of which they made a kind of bread. Their churches were most primitive, the Caczes (clergy) were married and could neither read nor write. A few prayers, in Chaldean as St. Francis thought, were learnt by rote, but not understood by anybody. These, with four daily visits to the church and a special devotion to St. Thomas, the Apostle, who was believed to have converted their ancestors, seemed to be the extent of their religious practices. Francis baptised many of the children to the joy of their parents. The people begged him to remain with them, but as Socotra was liable to descents of the Arabs, the Viceroy refused his consent, fearing that Xavier might be captured as a slave. Besides, he thought there was a much wider field for Apostolic work in India than at Socotra.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> *Monum. Xav.*, Ep. XII, Vol. I, Fasc. 2, p. 254-5; Brou, I, 120 sqq.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE APOSTLE OF INDIA

#### § I. THE EAST INDIES

At length, after a swift passage across the Indian Ocean, our Saint arrived in the promised land. What was his delight when, as the vessel approached Goa, out of the distant haze of the Indian coast, he first caught a clear glimpse of that country which it had been prophesied he was to evangelize, and which for so many years had been the object of his dreams.

On the horizon rose to view the range of the Ghauts; lofty, precipitous mountains, whose jagged pinnacles and square table-like summits mingle together in bewildering confusion, never more sublime than at the moment of sudden tropical dawn. Then they are seen from the sea, soaring into the clear sky above undulating billows of mist, which hide the lower part of the chain, the hilly table-lands of the western coast of Hindustan. Beneath the burning rays of the risen sun these vaporous mists gradually roll higher and higher, till they vanish altogether, leaving an enchanting view of mountains and plains thickly covered by forests and cocoa groves. At the approach of the monsoon, in June, the Ghauts look stern and forbidding, while dark clouds gather over the rocky peaks. The coloring of the mountains — varying according to rich vegetation or tracts of denuded soil — shows

sometimes warm shades of enchanting blue, green, slate, and umber, sometimes the red and yellow tones of originally white felspar granite and quartz whose scarp'd precipices reflect the rays of the fiery Indian sun. The passes leading from the Ghauts to the Malabar coast are far steeper and more abrupt than those descending on the eastern side into the inland plains. The coast-line is broken by islands and peninsulas. Those of Bardes and Salsette protect the harbor of Goa, which is the estuary of the Mandavi. This river, flowing round the island of Goa, whose cape projects between the two promontories, divides into two parts the harbor, which is capable of holding the largest vessels from September to May. At the time of Francis Xavier's arrival, the island was the site of the beautiful city of Goa, known as "the Queen of the East and the pride of the children of Lusuz" (Camoens). Goa originally was a native town on a marshy isle, but was removed to the south side of the Mandavi estuary by the Mohammedans when they overran India.

Under the great explorer Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese, in 1497, at length discovered the route by the Cape of Good Hope to the great Asiatic peninsula, which had been known to them only by report since the overland routes had been closed by the Saracens. Until the beginning of the 15th century the trade between Arabia, Persia, Egypt, and Hindustan was very considerable and carried on solely by Mohammedans, who were not bound by the Hindu caste law of never crossing the sea. Chinese junks also visited the Mala-

bar coast towns. In 1510, when the rapacious Portuguese first appeared off the Indian coast, seizing Goa, where they found a large colony of Jews driven from Spain and Poland,—there is no doubt that the Hindu and Mohammedan inhabitants were highly civilised. Even if they did not possess the same kind of civilization current in Europe, yet in many respects these Orientals far surpassed their Western invaders by their honesty and a kind and humane disposition towards prisoners of war. On the other hand the Portuguese treated such with appalling brutality, often torturing them to death. The native merchants on the Malabar coast were so upright in their commercial dealings that, like the Chinese merchants of our day, they did not need to keep receipts or bills. The Rajahs and other rulers administered justice with fairness, wrote an Italian traveller, Varthema, who had been thrown into a stinking dungeon and ill-treated by a half-caste Portuguese, who thereby enabled his victim to make comparisons between western and eastern ideas of humanity. The Hindus always kept their pledges to the Portuguese, who thought that “they had a divine right to pillage, rob and massacre the natives.”<sup>1</sup>

Though on their first entrance into Hindustan the Portuguese sought to conciliate the native kings and their subjects by a show of fair play, yet in a very short time they began to behave more like savages than Christians. Nothing could exceed the brutality, rapacity, and cruelty of the newcomers, who by their

<sup>1</sup> Robert Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire*, ch. xiii; Brou, I, 124 sqq.



infamous conduct and total disregard of the laws of God and man rendered the name of Christianity a bye-word among the teeming races of India. After proclaiming the King of Portugal Lord of the sea, Vasco da Gama bombarded Calicut and killed 800 harmless and defenceless fishermen, besides scuttling a native ship which had 700 people on board. The next Viceroy, Almeida, with his 1500 soldiers, fought the natives until it dawned on his mind that he was not promoting the interests of Portuguese commerce by rousing enmity. These western adventurers were slightly more tolerant of the Hindu pagans than they were of the Moslems, whom on religious grounds they considered their hereditary foes. When the native princes were at war, the Portuguese often took part with one rajah against another, supplying him with horses and weapons, while establishing their own forts and factories along the Malabar coast.

As for the city of Goa, its ever increasing wealth at the time of Francis' appearance was even surpassed by the frightful vices he found flourishing like weeds among the corrupt European settlers, many of whom had been reckless characters before they were shipped to the East Indies.

This may suffice as a meagre description of the new field marked out by Providence for the energy, zeal, and rare genius of Francis Xavier.

## § 2. THE APOSTLE ARRIVES AT GOA

As soon as his ship had cast anchor in the harbor of Goa, Francis went ashore. Notwithstanding the invi-

tations of the Viceroy and other distinguished men, who would gladly have received him in their palaces, he followed his usual practice and betook himself to the public hospital. The next day saw him seeking his first audience of the Bishop of Goa, Dom Juan de Albuquerque, a Franciscan and former confessor of King John. This prelate's spiritual jurisdiction extended over all the Portuguese settlements in Africa and the East Indies. Full of zeal for religion, he deeply deplored the way in which it was neglected by those around him. Owing to the shortage of clergy and the abuses committed by some of his few available priests, he was unable to cope with the immorality of the European colonists, much less to attempt the conversion of the dense pagan and Moslem population. Although the Franciscan friars did their best to help the Bishop, they were too few in number to preach everywhere. Hence there were scarcely any conversions among either Europeans or infidels. The former were leading abominable lives, while the Hindus were sunk in idolatry or addicted to devil and serpent worship, with its attendant shameful and degrading usages.

On the other hand the Moslems clung to their false creed with that fanaticism which, existing to the present day, renders it difficult or almost impossible to make any marked progress in their conversion. In Goa and the outlying country districts there were about 23,000 descendants of the converts made by St. Thomas the Apostle or some other early missionary.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> On the legend of St. Thomas see Jos. Dahlmann, S. J., *Indische Fahrten*, Vol. II, pp. 150 sqq., Freiburg, 1908; *IDEM*,

They were all Nestorians, obeying the schismatic patriarch of Babylon and using the Syrian liturgy in their churches. Surrounded by such overwhelming obstacles, the Bishop, therefore, cordially welcomed Francis, who, kneeling at his feet, humbly presented the papal Bulls appointing him Apostolic Nuncio, with the assurance that he would make use of them only as it seemed best to the Bishop. Dom Juan embraced him affectionately and desired him to make full use of all the facilities granted in the Briefs, which, indeed, required no permission on his part, conferred as they were upon Xavier by the Holy Father himself without restriction. Thus began a sincere friendship between Francis and the Bishop of Goa, who considered him to be a messenger from God for the sorely needed conversion of his flock.

Leaving the Bishop's palace, Francis returned to the hospital through the well-paved and regular streets, climbing and descending the sandy hills of the island. On every side were to be seen low palaces and houses built of sandstone, with carved balconies, lofty rooms and windows glazed with lozenge-shaped panes of thin shavings of oyster shells which, excluding the trying glare of the sun, admitted a very subdued light. The roofs were either thatched or tiled, and the walls, which were painted red and white, made the town look bright and cheerful. The broad staircases were often of the red clay used for pottery. Each building had its own garden, well and orchard within a low-walled com-

*Die Thomaslegende*, Freiburg, 1912; H. Thurston, S.J., in the *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIV, pp. 658 sq.

pound. During the rains the deep paved canals intersecting the town in every direction were so full of water that they could only be crossed by small bridges erected for public use. The city walls and well-guarded gates were down by the river and harbor. In the many market places vendors squatted amid their varied wares (fruit, vegetables, grain, rice, fowl, meat and fish) displayed beneath huge "sombros" or umbrellas about six or seven feet in diameter. There were also other kinds of merchandise, especially slaves from Africa, and Hindus too often kidnapped by unscrupulous Portuguese from remote districts, in defiance of the treaty on this subject with the native princes. These poor creatures, as Francis soon discovered, were treated far worse than the horses imported from Persia and Arabia for the great annual fairs held at Goa. In the streets of the city could be seen elephants pacing carefully through the crowds, or beautiful horses either ridden or led, as well as palanquins containing ladies, borne by slaves and escorted by running native footmen. People of every nationality jostled each other, from the haughty Portuguese to the scantily clad coolie. Nothing could be more striking than the white draperies and brilliant turbans of the Mohammedans, or the ample dark bournous of swarthy Arabs, the long kaftan of Armenian or Persian, the scarlet or gold embroidered turbans with gaily hued silk or cotton skirt ("sarong") worn by Malabar merchants and Malayans from the distant archipelago which Francis was to know so well a few years hence. With long moustaches tied behind their

ears, and brightly colored kerchiefs carelessly knotted over their long hair, Eastern corsairs swaggered on their way. Far more numerous were bronzed Hindus, whose scant costume contrasted oddly with that of 16th century Europeans, so very unsuited to an Indian climate. Occasionally women of the lowest caste passed by, wearing short silk or cotton jackets and petticoats decked with quantities of gold ornaments of every description. Here and there a leper begged, or an Indian fakir could be seen sitting on the roadside displaying some purposely distorted and hideous limb, if he were not disdainfully stalking along in grimy yet arrogant aloofness, while perchance a dark or pale-faced Jew glided swiftly through the multi-colored and vociferous crowd. Doubtless Francis noticed native children swarming about everywhere like little brown flies. Above the din of harsh voices could be heard the croak of ubiquitous Indian crows, while through palm and fruit trees flashed screaming parrots and birds of many-tinted plumage. The uproar was still further augmented by the booming of the pagoda gongs and the monotonous yet maddening roll of rapidly beaten tam-tams. From the church of St. Francis of Assisi, once a mosque, and from other sacred buildings, floated the tones of consecrated bells tolling the familiar Angelus and recalling to our Apostle the native land he would never see again. As he murmured the Angelic Salutation, his heart swelled with compassion for the teeming multitudes around him to whom these Catholic bells meant nothing. The undaunted spirit of the missionary clearly realised the

magnitude of the task imposed upon him, but relying solely on God's help, he was determined to labor for the salvation of these Eastern races as long as strength and life endured.

Much indeed waited to be done by Francis at Goa. The native Christians, on the one hand, were persecuted by Mohammedan neighbors, and, on the other, were demoralised by the wickedness of European adventurers, preying like so many locusts upon the land. Portuguese officials shamelessly accepted bribes in courts of justice, and extorted money by the foulest means. Continual and brutal murders were counted as deeds of prowess, and the expostulations, rebukes, and excommunications of the Bishop were wholly ignored. The sacraments were as good as abolished, and if any one tried to amend his ways, he had to go to confession by night in order not to excite the enmity of his neighbors. There were no preachers in the city, while in all Hindustan only four priests could be found who were able to preach the Word of God in a suitable manner. Though there were plenty of churches erected by the Portuguese, they were always empty, and neither the holy sacrifice of the Mass nor a sermon could be heard in them from one year's end to the other. Though the pagans were so licentious, and those who were devil worshippers were in the habit of sacrificing their own infants to Satan, Francis rightly judged that for the present his mission was to convert the Portuguese, whose evil example was ruining baptised Hindus and scandalising heathen and Moslem alike.

Here was a task that indeed required heroic faith in God for its accomplishment! But Francis soon began, determined to consecrate the greater part of his nights to prayer, which he sometimes interrupted to attend to the sick in the hospital where he lodged. Three or four hours at most were given to sleep, which was frequently taken at the foot of the bed of some one dangerously ill, so as to be at hand if wanted. So light was his sleep that he awoke at the sound of a groan or moan and hastened to console the sufferer. The dawn would find Francis seeking help and guidance for the coming day on his knees. Then he would say Mass with such fervor that sometimes at the elevation he was seen raised in the air, while beams of light surrounded his head. When giving Holy Communion on his knees — as was the custom at Goa — he was seen raised from the earth.<sup>3</sup> This phenomenon was also observed at Malacca and other places at a later period.

As soon as Francis had attended to the physical and spiritual needs of the sick, he set out to visit the leper hospital in the suburbs, bringing the alms he had begged from door to door for these miserable outcasts. He gave them religious instruction, consoled them in their sufferings, and on Sundays and holy days said Mass for them and gave them Communion. When this daily visit was over, the Apostle returned to the city and proceeded to go through the prisons, real sinks of iniquity, where he entered as an angel of light to bring unhappy souls to repentance. He also per-

<sup>3</sup> Dryden, *Life*.

suaded the Viceroy to inspect the hospitals and prisons once a week; — a practice which King John took care to recommend to the next Viceroy, Joam de Castro.<sup>4</sup>

### § 3. METHODS OF EVANGELIZATION

Aware that if any lasting amendment was to be made in the wicked town of Goa, the work of conversion must begin with the children, Francis, on leaving the prisons, used to walk through streets and squares ringing a bell and calling aloud: "Faithful Christian friends of Jesus Christ, for the love of God, send your boys and girls and your slaves of both sexes to hear the catechism of Christian doctrine." These words were written down by Father Lucena, who deposed

<sup>4</sup>In his dealings with the natives it must be admitted that Sousa was not much better than his predecessors. Among other questionable deeds he refused a bribe of an enormous sum to spare the destruction of a temple, where he spent a night torturing the Brahmans and digging up the pavement in search of fabulous treasures, which he imagined to be buried there. His intrigues and disputes with the natives and his seizure of food allotted to the soldiers rendered him heartily disliked by both Asiatics and Europeans. But, probably owing to Francis' representations, he at last comprehended the extent of corruption and dishonesty prevailing in every governmental department. Becoming more and more alarmed and disgusted, he was glad to return home at the end of his three years and a quarter spent in the colony, remarking "that he did not dare to govern India, since the men there had become so changed from truth and honor." With all his serious defects as an official, Sousa was really a religious man in his own way; he could be charitable, and he always did his best to help Francis, who, cognisant of his good qualities, was a true friend to him and exercised a good influence over him. Cfr. F. C. Danvers, *The Portuguese in India*, ch. xvii, p. 467.



that, at this time, Francis also composed a small catechism.<sup>5</sup> When the crowd assembled, he first catechised the children and then preached to the adults in the open air, as we read in the *Life* written by Father de Guzman, S.J., in the 16th century. In his letters to Ignatius he says that he took the children, often 300 in number, into the Church of our Lady of the Rosary, near the hospital, to teach them their prayers and the commandments of God, and that the Bishop ordered the priests of Goa to do the same in all their churches, so that the result surpassed all that could have been expected.<sup>6</sup>

In a short time the hitherto unruly children under Xavier's instruction acquired the virtues of modesty and piety, and their reformation acted as a silent admonition to their depraved families. Occasionally one of these little converts protested against the crimes he witnessed, in such a way as to abash the most hardened ruffians. In order to impress the truths of faith upon the volatile minds of his small hearers, Francis bethought himself of setting his simple catechism to musical airs, which he sang and taught to the children, making them sing in chorus. This novel system became so popular that both children and slaves got into the habit of singing the catechism. This odd custom has lasted to the present day. When Francis appeared in the streets with his bell, not only children and slaves, but whole families of men and women,

<sup>5</sup> Pagès, *Lettres*, Vol. I, ch. ii, p. 39.

<sup>6</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, Ep. XIX, Fasc. 2, p. 257.

Portuguese and natives, ran to hear him. On Sundays and feasts the Apostle preached in the morning, before the Viceroy, to the colonists. He often reproved their vices, and his eloquent words exercised a wonderful effect upon the congregation, melting hardened hearts like wax, says the old biographer, and bringing thousands to repentance. In the evening he addressed himself to the native Christians upon some article of the faith, and often repeated the chief prayers and the ten commandments. In these sermons to crowds of Indian Christians and pagans, Francis used the debased dialect of Portuguese mixed with Hindu and Malayan words, which was generally spoken and understood by everybody in the East Indies. Later he took care to study the vernacular usually employed in Southern India, which in the course of ten years he could speak fluently, according to the Licentiate, Joam Vaz. This ecclesiastic, on his return to Lisbon, told the Fathers of the Society that he had spent six months with Francis, who always went barefooted, dressed in an old ragged soutane and a kind of black stuff hood as a protection from the sun. The Licentiate said that Xavier was universally loved and was called "the Great Father." From Goa, Father Lancilotti wrote to Ignatius that Francis had captivated all hearts, and by his sermons, his catechisms, and hearing confessions, had gained a great name in this part of India.<sup>7</sup> It is said that he asked the steward of the hospital where he lodged to give him a sleeveless tunic similar to that

<sup>7</sup> Cros, *Vie*, Vol. I, ch. xxv, p. 40.

worn by the Goa priests. Finding the coarse one offered him too good, Francis got another, made of the commonest material that could be found. In the same way he replaced a worn-out shirt and a pair of shoes. His friends could only make him wear a new soutane by taking away the old one when he was asleep and leaving the other in its place. On awakening, Francis, absorbed in prayer, never perceived the change. One day, going to dine with a friend who had provided the new garment, the other guests, aware of the trick played upon Francis, began to compliment him upon his fine soutane. The Saint in much confusion felt the stuff and appeared as much ashamed as if he had stolen it.<sup>8</sup>

Francis used to go about among the Portuguese colonists, sometimes inviting himself to dine with them or accepting their invitations. To avoid notice, he partook of whatever was offered him. He would profit by these visits to ask for the children, whom he caressed, while treating their mother — often a poor slave — as though she were a respectable lady, speaking kindly to her and even praising her beauty to gratify and gain the esteem of his host.<sup>9</sup> When left alone with him, the Saint would say: "You have a fair slave who deserves to be your wife." Or if she were an ill-favored native, whom he very well knew the man would never marry, Francis used to exclaim: "Good God, what a monster! How can you endure the sight of her in your house?" The Portuguese,

<sup>8</sup> Michel, *Vie*, Livre II, ch. i, p. 98.

<sup>9</sup> Brou, I, 167 sq.

thus admonished, would marry the woman recommended by his guest, and turn away the other undesirable inmates of his house.<sup>10</sup>

By Xavier's persuasion, disputes and feuds were settled, ill-gotten gains restored, slaves enfranchised, and no longer tortured or killed by their angry masters. The alms he received, he distributed in the hospitals and prisons. The churches were no longer deserted, those who had rarely, if ever, approached the sacraments, now came regularly. Thus, in the half year Xavier spent at Goa, a considerable reformation had taken place to the intense joy of the Bishop, who so loved and admired his new friend that he consulted him upon everything and agreed to all his plans. So perfect was the concord between the Bishop and the humble missionary, that it was observed they seemed to have but one heart and one soul between them. Indeed Francis was so active that he wrote to Rome: "If it had been possible for me to have been in ten places at once, I should not have wanted employment."<sup>11</sup>

#### § 4. LETTERS OF FRANCIS TO HIS FATHER GENERAL

In a letter to the Society in Rome, dated September 15th, 1542, Xavier said that the Viceroy was going to send him to a district called Cape Comorin, where there were many Christian natives, and that he meant to take with him two native deacons who spoke Portu-

<sup>10</sup> Dryden, *Life*.

<sup>11</sup> Dryden, *Life*, Bk. II.

guese, and another young man in minor orders. "The fatigue of a long journey, life in an idolatrous land and an intensely hot climate, all these trials," he wrote, "endured for God's sake, as is our duty, become the source of innumerable consolations and joys. I am full of the idea that lovers of the cross of Jesus Christ find their true rest in these toils, and think it death to avoid or be deprived of the cross. For could any death be more cruel, after following Jesus Christ, than to forsake Him and follow one's own will?" Wistfully he expressed his longing for letters which had never come, to give news of the Society; since, in St. Paul's words, they could not see each other "face to face," but as it were "through a glass in a dark manner only,"—that was to say, in their case, by letters. Francis also told Ignatius about the college of Santa Fè, which had recently been founded by Miguel Vaz, vicar-general of the Indies, and a celebrated preacher, formerly a Franciscan friar, Dom Diego de Borba, with the help of Vasco da Gama's son Estaban, when he was governor at Goa. This college was intended to educate for the priesthood native boys who might be expected to spread the knowledge of the Gospel among their own people with the assistance of native catechists and interpreters. These lay assistants could also be very useful to European missionaries in their labors. Considerable revenues from ancient pagodas were assigned to this college, to which was attached a confraternity under the patronage of the Apostle St. Paul.<sup>12</sup> When Francis arrived at Goa, sixty boys

<sup>12</sup> After the Collège Saint-Paul, or Santa Fè, as it was indif-



**CASTLE OF XAVIER, RESTORED**



were already being taught there by Dom Diego de Borba. This zealous missionary, on meeting Francis, was so much attracted by his charm of manner and his holiness, that he offered him the superintendence of the new seminary. Xavier knowing that he was to do the work of a pioneer in distant missions, accepted Borba's proposal on behalf of Father Paul Camerino on his arrival from Mozambique, where he was still detained. He advised Borba to divide the college into two sections. In the first should be a hundred children learning Christian doctrine and literature, while in the second should live apart sixty youths preparing for holy orders. These young men were to visit the sick and dying, to bury the dead, and to practice all works of mercy by way of a novitiate for their future career. Xavier told St. Ignatius that it was hoped that in a few years many zealous missionaries might be sent from this seminary to evangelize the East. He thought in six years there would be more than 300 pupils of "all races and languages" to increase hereafter the number of Indian Christians. As soon as the Viceroy's campaigns with the pagans were over, he meant to finish the college buildings. He added that the Viceroy had written to the Portuguese King to ask the Pope to send to India some more Fathers of the Society, to become the pillars of the college, which some called St. Paul, and others Santa Fè, which latter title, he himself preferred, as the pupils were ferently called, had been transferred to the Society of Jesus, the Fathers were known everywhere in India by the name of Paulists.



destined to preach the true faith to infidels. Good masters should be sent, and with his usual practical common sense Xavier observed that, on account of the hot climate and excessive hardships, it would be necessary to send strong, young and energetic Fathers, though even older ones, if healthy and active, could be useful hearing confessions and preaching. In another letter Francis praised Sousa's zeal for religion and his desire that indulgences should be granted by the Holy See on the feast of St. Thomas the Apostle, to whom the native Christians had much devotion.

There were several churches at Goa dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, remarkable for beauty of ceremonies, the magnificent vestments, and their large congregations. The number of native neophytes was daily increasing, so that there were not now enough priests to hear confessions during Lent. The members of the Misericordia Sodality,—all respectable persons,—attended to the needs of indigent Christians and converts. It was wonderful all they did for the poor. Their hospital, built at the coming of the Portuguese, was probably Francis's headquarters. He also described the settlements in the East as being at such immense distances that, although the Bishop had vicars at these places, it was impossible for him to visit them regularly. Therefore the Viceroy wished that the Pope would authorise the prelate to delegate to his vicars the faculty of administering Confirmation to Christians surrounded by barbarians and continually at war with them. Francis remarked that during the hot season fish putrefied almost as soon as it

was caught, which gave an excuse for the non-observance of Lent, which fell due at that time. The sea being calm, the troops were absent on campaign and the merchants on trading voyages. Therefore the Viceroy asked that Lent should be deferred to July, when the heat was diminished by the monsoon, and the stormy seas precluded navigation. Xavier thought this proposal reasonable and that it would redound to the greater honor of religion if it were granted.

Francis Xavier was now going six hundred miles south, to the Pearl Fishery Coast, extending as far as Cape Comorin at the extremity of the Indian peninsula. This region was inhabited by a low caste of fishermen — the Paravers — who, on being liberated by the Portuguese from the yoke of the Mohammedans, had been baptised by the Vicar-General, Miguel Vaz, and three other priests. These natives were exceedingly poor and ignorant; and Miguel Vaz said that for want of priests speaking their tongue, the Paravers knew nothing of their religion, and that all the children born since he had been in those parts were still unchristened. On hearing this Francis lost no time in applying to the Viceroy and the Bishop for leave to start. By a letter dated from Tuticorin on the Fishery Coast, dated October 28th, our Saint must have left Goa after the 2nd of September, 1542, when he had despatched his epistle to St. Ignatius.

## CHAPTER V

### MISSIONARY LABORS IN HINDUSTAN

#### § I. AMONG THE PARAVERS

As we stated, Francis Xavier must have left Goa when the southwest monsoon was almost over, and the sea, being less rough, permitted the sailing of Portuguese trading vessels. The Viceroy offered him a large sum, but faithful to his vow of poverty, he accepted only a pair of shoes to protect his bare feet on the burning sands of the Fishery Coast.

Accompanied by three native interpreters and catechists, two of whom were deacons, Francis embarked on a galiot, which was about to convey the Portuguese official appointed to govern Cape Comorin. Though the early biographers say that Xavier took Mansilhas, leaving Father Camerino to assist Borba at the college, it would seem from what he himself wrote to Ignatius, that he could not have taken Mansilhas for the simple reason that neither Mansilhas nor Camerino had yet reached Goa from Mozambique.<sup>1</sup>

After a voyage of 600 miles, Francis landed at Cape Comorin, where there was a Portuguese settlement. He at once began to evangelise the villages inhabited by Christian neophytes of the Paraver caste — a black race of pearl-fishers, who came originally from

<sup>1</sup> Brou, I, 185.

the Malabar coast. Francis informed St. Ignatius that the Cape district was not much frequented by colonists because of its sterile soil. The neophytes knew nothing but the fact that they were baptised; there were no priests to teach them their religion. Francis baptised all the children that were still unchristened, from mere infants to older children who would not let him say his office, eat or sleep, until he taught them their prayers. Mindful that "the kingdom of heaven is for such," he could not refuse their petition and instructed them in making the sign of the Cross and reciting the Pater, Ave, the Apostles' Creed, and a profession of faith, which they could repeat to their parents and friends. These children were very intelligent and he thought they would turn out excellent Christians.

On the road to Tuticorin, a small port in the gulf of Manaar, where was the chief pearl fishery, Francis entered a village where none would listen to his interpreter. Hearing that a poor woman was dying in agony, he took his interpreter into the sick woman's house, where he invoked the Lord's name, forgetting that he was in a strange land, and thinking of the Psalmist's words, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, the world and all they that dwell therein."<sup>2</sup> He then made the native deacon translate his instructions and the Creed. The patient having said she believed all she had heard, and wished to be baptised, Xavier recited a Gospel over her and followed it by the administration of baptism. Shortly afterwards a child was born, and the mother was out

<sup>2</sup> Ps. XXIII, 1.

of danger. This event was soon known in the village, where the Apostle vainly tried to persuade the headmen to listen to him. As they refused to be converted without the leave of their prince, Francis spoke to a native official who was collecting the rajah's taxes; this man desired the people to become Christians, though he would not hear of joining them himself. When the people, including the husband and family of the woman just healed, were all baptised, the Saint and his deacon travelled ninety miles on foot to Tuticorin, where they were welcomed by the natives, mostly pearl-fishers and divers.

## § 2. THE NATIVES OF THE FISHERY COAST

This first visit to the Fishery Coast, which was not of long duration, was confounded by most of the ancient biographers with the second occurring in the year 1544. Francis must have returned to Goa some time in 1543, for in his report to Rome from Cochin (Jan. 15th, 1544) he said that Father Camerino had been left at the Goa college, while Mansilhas was with Xavier at Cape Comorin, where there were many Christians and conversions were being made every day. As he spoke the Biscayan tongue and they the Malabar dialect, which he did not know, he chose some intelligent men having a knowledge of Portuguese, and assisted by them, studied the native dialect sufficiently to enable him to translate the commandments, the Sign of the Cross, the Pater, Ave, Salve Regina, and the Confiteor, which he learnt by heart. He adopted a method of teaching the people whom he called together

by ringing his bell as he walked through the towns and villages. This method which Francis described minutely to St. Ignatius, was quite thorough in its effect upon the converts. At the same time the continuous repetition of prayers, Christian doctrine, and the explanations were exceedingly arduous and fatiguing to the missionary, who often spoke for hours exposed to the tropical heat. In his Apostolic zeal Francis never spared himself. He frequently was quite hoarse and exhausted by nightfall, while his arm would be stiff and tired from baptising the inhabitants of many villages, who crowded round him to be made children of God. It was his firm conviction that, to ensure the success of a mission, it was imperative to begin with the children, who by reason of their youth could learn Christian doctrine and prayers quickly, and soon acquired such a horror of paganism as to destroy the idols and to reproach their parents for adoring them. Xavier made his young converts repeat all he taught them in their own homes, the streets and public squares.

When too busy to attend to requests to pray over the sick, Francis often sent his beads or crucifix by these children, whose piety excited admiration as they recited their prayers and tried to induce the sick to become Christians. Invalids sometimes recovered at the touch of Francis' beads or crucifix, when they would also obtain the grace of conversion. As soon as the Saint thought that Christianity was fairly well established in one village, he went on to another, and in this way visited a great part of Southern India.

Having translated the catechism into the Malabar dialect during his short residence in one town, Francis made it a practice henceforth to leave a copy of this work in every hamlet, telling those who could write to make other copies, while the illiterate, who were far more numerous, might learn it orally. Well instructed native catechists were stationed in each of the thirty villages on the Fishery Coast. Their wages were paid out of a sum of gold given by the Viceroy Sousa.

Two years later, when Father Juan de Beira came to the Fishery Coast, he was amazed at the eagerness displayed by the natives to be taught religion, and the fervor which Francis had excited among them. Father Beira wrote there were many churches where the rules of "Master Francis" were strictly observed in the ceremonies. "It is really admirable to behold the zeal of the children coming morning and evening to recite their catechism and listen to its explanation. Women on Saturdays and men on Sundays come to the church for two hours' religious instruction. There are no more traces of idolatry. God has made use of Master Francis to do so much good work, and he was greatly regretted when he departed to evangelise other lands, where he brought many souls to God."<sup>3</sup>

### § 3. BRAHMANS OF THE SOUTH

Francis described the Brahmans, whom he often met in Southern Hindustan, as being a vicious set of men who preyed upon the natives, threatening

<sup>3</sup> Michel, *Vie*, Livre II, ch. ii, p. 108.

them with the vengeance of their idols if they did not give everything demanded as offerings to their shrines. He added that the Brahmans were greatly irritated at his exposure of their frauds, but when alone with him, would frankly own that they gained their livelihood by telling lies about their idols. They tried to make Xavier appear as an accomplice by sending him presents, which to their deep annoyance he invariably refused. They told him they believed in the existence of one God, but that did not prevent him from denouncing their wicked superstitions to the Hindus, who would all have become Christians had it not been for the opposition of the Brahmans. He had been able to convert only one young Brahman, whose time was now spent catechising children. Though Xavier found the Brahmans as a rule ignorant, he had come across one educated man among them. When alone with him, this Brahman told him that in the college where he studied the scholars took an oath never to reveal the mysteries taught by their masters. However, out of friendship, he revealed them to the Saint. One of them was that there was only one Creator of heaven and earth, whom men should worship, instead of the idols, which really represented demons. The Brahman sages taught in a learned language, just as Europeans did in Latin. They kept the Lord's day, which he (Francis) could hardly credit, and at different hours they recited these words: "I adore thee, O God, and I implore thy help forever." Their sacred books predicted a period when all men should profess the same religion. Xavier's informant added that many



forms of incantation were taught to the students. He then inquired about the Christian doctrine, and wrote Francis's explanation on his tablets. Seeing that he did not really comprehend his instructions, Xavier refused to baptise him at that time, though he hoped he might eventually become a Christian. He desired the Brahman to teach the Hindus the existence of the one true God, but he replied that he was bound by oath not to reveal this doctrine, besides he feared the demons might kill him.

One day, as Francis was passing by a pagoda where two hundred Brahmans lived, these men came to talk to him. He exposed their ignorance of religion, whereupon they admitted that the first precept of their gods was to adore cows, and the second, to give alms to Brahmans serving pagodas. The Saint then arose, and telling them to remain seated, began in their own tongue to recite aloud the Creed and the Ten Commandments, explaining the meaning as he proceeded. He then astonished his hearers by telling them how people by the lives they led qualified themselves for heaven or hell. Though the Brahmans acknowledged that the God of the Christians must be the true God, yet when Francis said they should become converts, human respect and the fear of losing their livelihood made them refuse.

The gift of tongues, which seems to have been frequently given Francis, was supplemented by the power of reading men's thoughts. He could so throw himself into their point of view, that very often, without understanding one word of the native dialect, he

seized the meaning of what was said and answered through his interpreters.

On his journeys Francis usually begged a little rice and water with, now and then, a small fish, which he cooked and shared with the native boys who served him. He never touched wine or meat except when invited to dine with anyone, so as to avoid notice. He often subsisted for several days on a little bread and water or sour milk; and notwithstanding his severe labors in a hot and unhealthy climate, his fasts were frequent and rigorous. For three or four hours he slept at night on the bare ground in some fisherman's hut. After a short rest he rose to devote the remaining hours to contemplation and prayer on his knees before the Blessed Sacrament where there was a church, or else before his crucifix. From early dawn to mid-day, Francis in his surplice, preceded by a boy carrying a cross, went through the narrow, filthy lanes of the village where he happened to be staying, and at every door asked whether there were sick people to visit, corpses to be buried, or children to be baptised. During the afternoon he received the Christians, patiently listening to their disputes, which he settled, as well as attending to their marriages to see that they were properly celebrated. Such an arduous life often brought illness upon Francis in places where there were no remedies to be obtained. At such times the Saint quietly waited until his recovery enabled him to resume his duties. The heathen, irritated by his conversions, sometimes attempted to deprive him of life, and the Christians had to keep a vigilant watch over

their beloved father. One night a troop of armed pagans surrounded the Apostle's dwelling, hoping to seize and put him to death. A Christian having warned Xavier, he had just time to climb into a tree, and thus escaped his assailants. Angered by their failure, they searched the house and the whole neighborhood, but in vain. When they finally withdrew at dawn, the Saint quit the sheltering tree and calmly betook himself to his usual ministry, as if nothing had occurred.<sup>4</sup>

Although his extraordinary austerities did not seem to affect him, Francis admitted that the fatigue he endured whilst he was converting the Paravers was almost insupportable; he being the only priest among 40,000 Christian natives. Yet he wrote to his brethren in Rome of the great comfort given by God to those "who go among the gentiles to convert them to the faith of Jesus Christ; so that one might say that if there were any joy in this life, it was to be found in these spiritual delights. Many times have I heard some one who was among these Christians say: 'O Lord, do not give me so much joy in the world, or if Thy infinite goodness and mercy continue to fill my soul, deign to take me into the abode of Thy glory, as it is such pain to live without seeing Thee.' Oh, if those who study so much would only desire to taste these delights, they would labor day and night to obtain them. If the pleasure they feel in making some learned discovery proceeded from their instructing others to know and serve God, how much happier

<sup>4</sup> Michel, *Vie*, Livre II, ch. i, p. III.

and better prepared they would be when called by God to give an account of their stewardship.”<sup>5</sup>

Though Francis was too humble to mention the great spiritual favors he received from God, he was often overheard crying out during prayer, with his hand on his heart and eyes raised to heaven: “*Basta ya, Señor, basta*” (Enough, Lord, enough). He was also known to open his soutane and pour water upon his chest, so ardent was the fire of divine love that inflamed his heart.

There never was a man who more perfectly answered the description given in the “Imitation” of a lover of Jesus Christ, as one who “flies, runs, rejoices; is free and not held; gives all for all, and has all in all: because he rests in one sovereign Good above all. Love often knows no measure, but is inflamed above all measure. Love feels no burden, values no labors, would willingly do more than it can, complains not of impossibility, because it conceives that it may and can do all things.”<sup>6</sup>

Thus his intense love of God was as a magnet by which Francis Xavier was able, in the space of ten years spent in the East, to draw many thousands into the fold of Christ. God supported His beloved servant by the gift of miracles, including from time to time that of tongues, as was very generally believed. However, he did not always trust to this, if we may judge by Xavier’s own remark concerning the Japanese language, that he and his companions were

<sup>5</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, Ep. X, Fas. 3, pp. 293-4.

<sup>6</sup> *Imit.*, Bk. 3, ch. vi.

“making ourselves children over again in learning the elements of it.”<sup>7</sup> He also wrote how carefully he studied the Malabar and Malayan dialects, though at first he preached through interpreters. The Licentiate, Joam Vaz, already mentioned, reported that “Master Francis speaks the language of the country very well, and sometimes, when followed by two, three, or six thousand people into the plains, used to get into a tree and preach to them.”<sup>8</sup> Being a man of highly trained intellect and excellent memory, Francis acquired the Eastern languages with such rapidity that he was soon able to dispense with interpreters in his sermons, his disputes with the Brahmans, and his instructions to native Christians and pagans, who belonged to separate tribes, each having a different dialect.

In the processes of canonization, however, over fourteen people personally acquainted with Xavier deposed that he could and did preach in the vernacular of any region he visited; which the natives rightly considered to be marvellous, seeing that the languages on the Fishery and Coromandel coasts were too difficult to be easily learnt. Besides, as we have already observed, when speaking in one dialect, he was understood by natives knowing only their own tongue; a miracle often repeated in the Malayan Archipelago and in Japan. Absorbed in his sacred duties, it is difficult to understand how Francis could have had time for the study of the many difficult languages in which he was heard to preach with fluency.

<sup>7</sup> Coleridge, *Life*.

<sup>8</sup> Cros, *Vie*, ch. xxv, p. 408.

#### § 4. RETURN TO GOA AND TRAVELS IN THE INTERIOR

Towards the end of 1543, seeing the enormous increase of Christianity on the Fishery Coast, which required the services of more missionaries, Francis returned to Goa, where he was joyfully received by the Governor and the colonists, who had heard of his miracles. The old biographer quoted in the *Monumenta Xaveriana* says these were very much exaggerated and it was reported that the Apostle had restored a man to life, a statement whose truth could not be attested, though it was commonly believed.<sup>9</sup>

Two months were passed at Goa by Francis transacting business on behalf of his dear Christians with the Bishop and the Viceroy. The latter gave him a large sum of money, which he had previously offered in his letters. About the same time, the College of Santa Fè was formally transferred to the Society of Jesus. In a letter to Ignatius, which Francis wrote later from Cochin, he relates that there were many pupils of pagan races there, speaking various languages. He hoped that the number of Christians would be increased by means of the students of this college. That his hopes were realised, can be seen in a report of Father Lancilotti to Rome, in which he said that the church was large and well built as well as the other college edifices. There were many children, speaking ten distinct dialects, and the older boys had been Christians for several years.

• *Mon. Xav.*, Fas. I, ch. X, p. 53.

Before leaving Goa for the second time, Francis made his religious profession in the hands of his friend, Bishop Albuquerque, the original copy being forwarded to Rome.

Francis now took Mansilhas and three secular priests, two of whom were natives, to the Fishery Coast, as well as several Malabar youths just trained as catechists. At Cochin, Xavier taught them his methods of religious instruction and then stationed them at various villages along the Coast. He visited them occasionally, providing them with all they required on their mission. Making his headquarters at Manapur, whence most of his letters to Mansilhas are dated, Francis penetrated into the interior of the country.

#### § 5. CORRESPONDENCE WITH MANSILHAS

It was during this year that the Saint kept up a continual correspondence with Francis Mansilhas, then stationed on the Fishery Coast. He was helped by Juan de Artiaga, a lay volunteer and military man from Francis's own part of Navarre. This valuable series of letters to Mansilhas are all in Portuguese, except the last note, which is written in Spanish. They were sent from the various places where Francis happened to be staying. Those published in the *Monumenta* are far shorter than the Latin translation on which Father Coleridge and Léon Pagès base their versions. Francis was leading an extremely busy life, and between his labors among the natives and his long journeys from one village to another, had not

much time to spare for correspondence. The somewhat rough style, the ill-spelt and concise sentences, were probably considered too colloquial to be presented in a stately Latin version of that period. Consequently the ancient translators often amplified an idea originally expressed in a few words into long paragraphs full of pious reflections, of which no traces are to be found in the original. In their desire to enhance the Apostle's sanctity, they overlooked another equally important characteristic, *viz.*, his extraordinary humility, which rendered him reserved about himself, while writing freely about others. By all accounts Mansilhas was not very brilliant, and Father Coleridge says he was a hot-tempered, impatient man, much given to discouragement and lack of energy in Apostolic work, which in his case was certainly arduous and wearing to the last degree. Francis continually impressed upon him the necessity of teaching the children thoroughly by constant repetition of Christian doctrine and prayers. Moreover, the native catechists and school-masters also needed help and supervision, which entailed an immense amount of travelling in Mansilhas' large district. Such hard, unceasing work in a tropical climate no doubt often dismayed Mansilhas. Yet Francis was always urging him to practice patience and charity, "making yourself known by your labors on behalf of the people, because if you be loved by them, you will be able to do much with them. Learn to bear patiently with their weaknesses, recollecting that if they be not as good as you desire, they will become so some day. Therefore be content with what



you can do, just as I am. When you feel that you have many duties which you cannot fulfill, console yourself by doing what you can, and return thanks to God that you are in a country where, if you wanted leisure, you could never have it, owing to your duties in God's service. Consider yourself as it were expiating your sins in Purgatory, and think how good God is in allowing you to expiate them in this world instead of the next." <sup>10</sup> Francis, in his letters, frequently inquired after Mansilhas' servant boy, Matthew, whom he had baptised and instructed,—about his health, clothes, and other needs, which Mansilhas was told to provide at Xavier's expense. If Matthew continued to be a good boy, he should be rewarded by a present. Mansilhas was to check the vice of arrac drinking among the natives, to be always kind and amiable to these people, and attentive to their children, making them pray for the success of the mission.

During the month of April Francis was ill of jungle fever for some days, at a place called Nares, where he was bled twice, as he wrote to Mansilhas, but was getting better. Father Coelho, he added, was sending two parasols, and they hoped soon to see Mansilhas at Punical. Our Saint often mentioned the devastation of the country by robber horsemen of the Badaga tribe, who hated the Christians, and he spoke of his visit to the persecuted natives who had taken refuge on the islands and rocks round Cape Comorin. As they had no food and were suffering great hardships, they were to be sent to Manapur in the boats

<sup>10</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, Fas. III, p. 346.

by which he had brought them water and food. There being much poverty at Manapur, Francis asked Mansilhas to help him in relieving these refugees. Care was to be taken that the "patatins" or village headmen, when collecting alms, did not exact them from the very poor who could not afford to give anything; nor were the headmen to take money by force from those who refused, though able, to give alms.<sup>11</sup>

The wickedness of the Portuguese often excited Francis's deep indignation. He told Mansilhas how they were kidnapping slaves from the native States, even servants of the king of Travancore, so that he (Francis) was obliged to postpone his journey to the court of that potentate, where he wished to obtain for the Christians protection from the savage pagan natives. Though of a hopeful and cheerful disposition, Francis was so disgusted with the lawless and rapacious Portuguese, that he said he would like to leave India where he could not check such crimes, and go to the land of Prester John (Ethiopia), where he could serve God with better results.

Despite their brevity and rough style, these letters to Mansilhas must be reckoned among the most precious documents extant concerning St. Francis Xavier. For here he unconsciously describes his own character and point of view respecting the work among the Easterns. Not a word of advice given to Mansilhas but was founded on his own method of action on his dearly beloved mission, and on almost every page we realise the Saint's loving kindness to all with whom he

<sup>11</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, Fas. 3, pp. 320, 327.

came in contact, and his special affection for the boys whom he was training to be so many little workers in the harvest field where the laborers were few. Indeed, says Father Michel, God so blessed the efforts of Xavier's little coadjutors, that it was later deposed that some children thus employed delivered a rich Hindu from a devil which possessed him and another raised a woman and a child to life.<sup>12</sup>

### § 6. SUCCESSFUL MISSION TO TRAVANCORE

Travancore was, and still is, a picturesque, fertile land, where the coast is covered by groves of palms, behind which rise the fantastic peaks, rocks, and dense forests of the Ghaut range, which, as a gigantic wall, separates Travancore from the eastern side of Southern India. On the outer shores of the many lagoons along the coast beats the surf of the Indian Ocean; but on the inner side the calm waterway takes its course between banks thickly shaded by palms, cocoa, banian, and other tropical trees, interlaced with luxuriant flowering creepers. As customs vary little among Asiatics, it is probable that in Francis Xavier's time the Travancore people used to sail in enormous gondola-like barks, hollowed out of cotton-wood trunks, like those which still plough the waters of the lagoons in such numbers—the quaint cabins on the poop crowded by natives.

According to Father Guzman, Francis eventually did go to Travancore, leaving the Fishery Coast in charge of his companions (1544). He obtained the

<sup>12</sup> Michel, *Vie*, Liv. II, ch. ii, p. 109.

Rajah's leave to preach to his subjects, the prince being anxious to have the Viceroy's support against his unruly vassals. Francis here pursued the same method of instruction which he had used with the Paravers. The Moorish corsairs suddenly appeared to plunder the new Christians, and Xavier, seeing that no help was forthcoming, knelt down with his converts to pray for divine assistance. When the Moslems approached, he boldly reproved them for their wicked conduct, threatening them with God's vengeance, whereupon, being much cowed, the pirates departed at once from the coast.

Francis visited over thirty villages in Travancore, where he worked so energetically that in a short time nearly the entire population became Christian, with the exception of the king and some of his courtiers. Francis preached in the fields, as there was no building capable of holding the congregations of sometimes five or six thousand people. He celebrated Mass also in the open air, a boat sail being stretched over the temporary altar. He never remained a month, or even a fortnight, in the same locality. This period is less remarkable for miracles; some sick people were cured and two dead persons were recalled to life. In one of these cases Xavier had been preaching in the seaside town of Coulan, but could only convert a few of the hardened pagans, brought by curiosity to hear his sermons. They admired the beauty and holiness of the Christian religion and admitted the excellence of its precepts, but refused to embrace it. Finding that no impression could be made upon them, the Saint

implored God to enlighten the blinded inhabitants of Coulan. He then recollected that on the previous day a dead man had been buried. So he told the people to re-open the grave and bring him the corpse, which in that hot country was already far decomposed. He knelt down beside it and, after a short prayer, commanded the dead man in the name of God to show the truth of the Catholic faith by returning to life. The man arose, and this stupendous miracle so convinced the people of the doctrines preached by Xavier, that they demanded baptism. The report of the miracle spreading rapidly over the land brought thousands into the Church.<sup>18</sup>

Nowhere in India could be found better Christians than in Travancore, where forty-five chapels were soon built.

During the process of Francis's canonization, a former servant deposed that he and another boy were once sleeping in a cabin on the Fishery Coast, when a cobra bit the latter, who died. On discovering in the morning what had occurred, and having seen the cobra escaping, Augustine de Payva ran to tell the Father. He smiled, and, going into the hut, took the dead boy by the hand. He rose perfectly well as if he had never been bitten. Another servant of our Saint, bitten by a venomous serpent on the road to Coimbatour, fell as if paralysed. Found lying unconscious by some people, they hastened to Francis, who ordered the man to be brought to him. He and the other Christians having prayed to-

<sup>18</sup> *Processus Canonisat.*, 1676, n. 97 sq.

gether, the Father with his finger applied a little of his saliva to the bitten foot. The servant recovered his senses and was restored to health.<sup>14</sup>

These are a few of the more remarkable miracles recorded of our Saint. They are well attested. There is hardly any Saint whose miracles are so numerous. (See Appendix.) To many modern minds the mere mention of a miracle is something abhorrent. They cannot bear the thought of the Creator interfering by direct action with the ordinary course of natural law. To such readers, if any such should open these pages, I make bold to say there is no miracle recorded of Francis more marvellous than the miracle of his life. Not what he did in the short span of his missionary career—a bare decade of years—but what he *became*. That proud young Spanish noble, that ambitious professor, that free-spoken counsellor of viceroys and kings, who by word and mien could sway all men, rich and poor, great and simple alike; that genius whom his fellows revered with pride and wonder, whom Ignatius Loyola regarded as a brother, rather than as a son—what has he become, now that he has been left to the promptings of his own heart and the influence of his difficult vocation? It is for the reader of this straightforward narrative to answer the question as best he can. Xavier, at the start of his life, was very human and undoubtedly great. But is there not a limit to mere human virtue? When we consider him as a missionary of Christ, has he not actually become Christ-like? If so, that is indeed a

<sup>14</sup> Michel, *Vie*, Liv. II, ch. ii.

miracle — a miracle of grace, a true sign of the divine government of the universe.

Francis wrote to Mansilhas that Father Diego and Master Paul (Camérino) and every one at the College were well. Many letters had come to Francis from Portugal and the license for Mansilhas' ordination, though he thought that the Bishop would ordain him without it, as he did two secular Fathers who were at Cochin on the way to join Mansilhas. Two of the Society had not yet arrived, and Xavier feared they would have to winter at Mozambique. There were sixty students at Coimbra University, most of them Portuguese, of which he was very glad. There had also been good news from the Society in Italy, and he hoped soon to see Mansilhas and to show him all his letters. Thus in these extracts from the correspondence with Mansilhas can be seen how zealously Francis labored for souls; how kind, charitable, and thoughtful he was in his intercourse with everybody; how he encouraged Mansilhas to persevere, and how he sought to cheer the poor lonely missionary by telling him the news he received from Europe.

### § 7. EXCURSION TO CEYLON

Before their martyrdom certain Manar Christians had asked Francis to pay them a visit. But as he was then engaged on the Travancore mission, he sent a secular priest, who baptised the petitioners shortly before they were killed by the king of Jafnapatam, the suzerain of this sandy isle off the northern coast of Ceylon. The fortitude of these martyrs — men,

women, and children — amazed their executioners, and the massacre produced the conversion not only of the king's retainers, but also of his eldest son, who was taught the Christian doctrine by a European merchant. The Singhalese chief, who hated Christianity, to conceal his own villainy had his son killed in an ambush and gave him a great pagan funeral. Dryden writes that the body was thrown to the wild beasts until rescued by a merchant, who buried the martyr by night. However, a witness of the ensuing prodigies wrote to Cardinal Enrique of Portugal that after an earthquake a large and beautiful cross was seen shining in the air and the earth opened in the shape of a cross where the prince's remains had been cremated. In obedience to the king of Cotta's order, the infidels vainly tried to fill up the opening. The shining cross in the sky frightened and converted many of them. The king's sister embraced the faith and instructed her own son and her nephew, brother of the martyred prince. With the help of the Portuguese merchant and some Franciscan missionaries in that region, she smuggled the young princes out of Ceylon and sent them to Francis Xavier, who received them as if they were angels from heaven, thanking God for such a conquest, and promised they should never repent sacrificing the goods of this world.<sup>15</sup>

Having heard that the king of Jafanapatam had usurped the throne of his brother, then a refugee at Goa, Francis went to see the Viceroy at Cambaya

<sup>15</sup> Michel, *Vie*, Liv. II, ch. iii, p. 141. Dryden's transl., Bk. III.



about the punishment to be meted out to this tyrant and about checking the Goa officials from taking bribes from the Brahmins to allow them to keep their pagodas open. During the voyage northward on this errand, Francis met a high official whose wicked life scandalised even the heathens. By degrees he gained his friendship, and the vessel halting at a port, the Apostle landed on the pretext of taking a walk with his new friend. Turning into a palm grove, the Saint knelt down and began to scourge himself so severely that the ground was reddened by his blood. Having told the astonished spectator that he had done this to win him over to God, the hardened man fell on his knees and made the confession he had hitherto refused to make.

Francis saw the Viceroy at Cambaya, and it was settled that a Portuguese fleet should be sent to punish the king of Jafnapatam. As Sousa could not go with the expedition himself, he suggested that Francis accompany it, so that he might take charge of the tyrant when captured and dethroned. The refugee princes were to be sent to the College of Santa Fè, where Francis went for a short time afterwards. By his letters it would appear that Francis was again at Cochin in January, 1545. The Vicar-general, Miguel Vaz, not having yet gone to Lisbon, Xavier told him about his visit to Sousa, who, he declared, was not energetic enough to repress the abuses prevalent everywhere among the officials. Vaz should point this out to the Portuguese monarch, to whom Xavier had

written a long letter in Latin, begging that in the interest of religion the King would send back Miguel Vaz as coadjutor to the Bishop of Goa, as his energy and perseverance alone could check persecution and injustice. As the Bishop was old and infirm, he stood in need of a sturdy coadjutor. Francis adjured the king to listen to his humble advice, and by means of royal letters and the due exercise of his authority to punish those who were disgracing religion in the colony. Missionaries of the Society should be sent by John III to Malacca and other places, where they were much needed. He was certain he himself would die in the East, and should never see His Majesty again. Therefore he prayed God would let them meet in a future world, and that the king should have the grace always to think and act as he would wish to have done at the hour of death.

Though sincerely attached to the Viceroy, Francis did not hesitate to recommend his recall when he saw how incompetent he was to control his unscrupulous subordinates. While denouncing the abuses he witnessed, Francis, with his usual prudence and charity, mentioned no names, leaving Miguel Vaz to convince the monarch of the necessity of reforming these scandals. Far from being offended, John III was only too anxious to second the efforts of the man whom he considered a saint, and superseded Sousa, sending out another viceroy, of whom we shall hear more later.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, pp. 356 sqq.

## § 8. LETTERS TO ST. IGNATIUS AND OTHERS

From Cochin, where Francis spent three months in the early part of 1545, he wrote several letters to St. Ignatius, to Simon Rodriguez at Lisbon, and to the Society at Rome.<sup>17</sup> Francis begged Ignatius to send Fathers to his assistance. Even those who were not of much use as preachers in Europe, would answer in India, where no great learning was needed among the pagans, who required merely to be taught their prayers and the catechism. But the missionaries must be strong and healthy, for they would have to travel from village to village, endure a tropical climate, and live without bread or wine, though plenty of rice, fish, and chickens were to be had everywhere. Men not fit for such an active life would be welcome at Goa and Cochin, both Portuguese settlements, where they would want for nothing and could render much service to God. The Saint wistfully observed that he had received only three letters from Rome during the past four years, though he was sure Ignatius had written, as he did every year. He was longing to hear about the Society and especially about Ignatius. All through his Apostolic mission in the East, it was one of Francis's most painful trials to hear so seldom from Europe, particularly from his beloved Father Ignatius, to whom he was in the habit of writing upon his knees out of veneration and humility.

If we wish to understand the reverence which Xavier showed to his Superior by this (of course wholly

<sup>17</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, pp. 360 sqq.

voluntary) practice, we must bear in mind that, besides the ordinary relation of subject to superior, the Saint felt an intense personal gratitude to his Father in God. We saw that in those early days at the University it was entirely owing to the prescience and perseverance of Ignatius, added to rare influence and tact, that Xavier had consecrated his life to God and the salvation of souls. If we could measure his love of God, or even his love of his vocation, we should be able to estimate his gratitude towards Ignatius. To suppose that there was in it any element of servility or unmanliness would be a curious aberration, not unlike the psychology of Herod when he thought Christ must be a fool because he was silent in his presence.

In his letters to the Society at large Francis described his method of teaching the natives, and how in a month he had baptised more than ten thousand people. Indeed the movement towards Christianity was so great, that he was sure there would soon be 100,000 Christians. He and Mansilhas had been to Ceylon. For the first time in his correspondence Xavier mentions another distant country, whence three chiefs and their people, becoming Christians, had sent to ask the Portuguese to procure them priests. This was Malacca, a place our Apostle already was thinking of visiting.

To Simon Rodriguez Francis did not conceal his low opinion of the colonists in the East. He conjured Rodriguez to dissuade his friends from taking any government post in the Indies, for it might well be said of such people as the Indian officials, "*de-*

*leantur de libro viventium et cum justis non scribantur," i. e., "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and with the just let them not be written."*<sup>18</sup> No matter how high might be Rodriguez's opinion of his friends, he should save them from such peril; for as they could not be confirmed in grace like the Apostles, he need never hope they would behave as they should do in a land where all went the road of "*rapis*." He (Francis) was shocked to see how well those of the colony could conjugate the wretched verb "*rapio*" (to steal). Rodriguez was asked to use his influence to have Miguel Vaz sent back to India, for he was an intrepid man with twelve years' experience and as much loved by the good as he was feared by the wicked.<sup>19</sup>

There seems at that time to have been some question of Rodriguez going on the Eastern mission, for Francis wrote what pleasure it would give him to see Rodriguez in India. If his physical strength equalled his zeal, he would summon him at once, provided Ignatius approved of it. However, the project was never realised, and Francis was fated to remain in the East far from the companion he loved so dearly.

During his residence at Cochin, Xavier lodged with some people who complained to him of the naughtiness of their small boy Lucas. He told them not to be downcast, as "the day will come when he will become a Franciscan friar and the Father of his brethren,"—a prediction fulfilled to the letter many

<sup>18</sup> Ps. LXVIII, 29.

<sup>19</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, p. 375; Brou, I, 307.

years afterwards. To his friend Cosmo Anes, who having purchased and sent to the Portuguese queen a valuable diamond, was anxious about its safe arrival, the Apostle promised to pray for the ship in which it had been forwarded with a cargo of spices to Lisbon. A few days later Francis, who had the revelation that this ship had been nearly wrecked on the voyage, said at table to Cosmo: "Be reassured, Master Cosmo, and give thanks to God, for at this moment your jewel is in the hands of the Queen of Portugal." By a letter from Lisbon, Cosmo Anes found that such had really been the case at the very time Francis gave him the good news.<sup>20</sup>

Leaving Cochin to join the fleet at Negapatam, which the Viceroy was sending to Jafnapatam, Francis visited the island of Manar, where at the natives' entreaty he prayed three days to God for the cessation of an epidemic which carried off hundreds of people. The plague ceasing, the heathens asked to be baptised. At Negapatam the Saint found that the punitive expedition had been renounced by the Portuguese, so as to obtain from the king of Jafnapatam the restitution of a ship laden with valuable cargo, which had been wrecked upon his coast. It was a bitter disappointment to our Apostle, who had been in hopes of converting this wicked ruler. Weeping, he predicted that this potentate would yet perish miserably at the hands of the Portuguese, and this came to pass some years afterwards. From Negapatam Francis wrote

<sup>20</sup> Michel, *Vie*, Liv. I, ch. iv, pp. 155-6; *Process.*, 1556, Goa, n. 1; Brou, I, 301.

two final letters to Mansilhas, whom he addressed as his "dear Father and Brother," thus indicating that Mansilhas was then ordained a priest. In the first epistle he said that if the expedition to Ceylon did not take place, he meant to go to Macassar, or to the Celebes islands, in May. He would get a letter of introduction from the Viceroy to the governor of Malacca, so that this official might give him every assistance.<sup>21</sup>

#### § 9. PILGRIMAGE TO THE TOMB OF ST. THOMAS AT MELIAPUR

On leaving Negapatam, Francis intended to return to Travancore, but the wind being unfavorable, he could not proceed in this direction, which he thought to be an intimation that God wished him to go to the Celebes.

In order to prepare for this new mission, Xavier resolved to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Thomas at Meliapur. He sailed from Negapatam on Palm Sunday and spent the first week of the voyage in prayer, taking no food for seven days. A storm which he had predicted forced the shipmaster to put back into Negapatam harbor; whence after a few days Francis travelled on foot fifty miles across country to Meliapur. The city of St. Thomas, as it was called by the Portuguese, was a flourishing commercial centre on the Coromandel coast. The name Meliapur, "Peacock's town," is derived from a tradition that, when St. Thomas was martyred, he "was in a grove outside his hermitage at prayer, and round about him were

<sup>21</sup> On the visit to Negapatam see Brou I, 319 sqq.

many peacocks. One of the idolators having gone with his bow and arrows to shoot fowl, not seeing the Saint, let fly an arrow at one of the peacocks, and this arrow struck the holy man in the right side, insomuch that he died of the wound, sweetly addressing himself to his Creator.”<sup>22</sup> Bishop Medlycott, mentioning this legend, says that, although “the natives do not deny the martyrdom, they think to lessen by this tradition the slur that their ancestors killed the Apostle.”<sup>23</sup>

It was generally believed that the Apostle’s relics were still in the tomb at Meliapur, though, according to a curious poem written in the IVth century, by Ephraim the deacon, of Edessa in Syria, with the exception of the fragment of a rib and a lance-head, the relics had all been removed by a pious merchant to “Edessa, the blessed city of our Lord.”<sup>24</sup> The tomb, however, remained in the church on a hill six miles from Meliapur, where the martyrdom is said to have occurred. The red earth taken from it, says Marco Polo, was believed by Christians, Tartars, and pagans to effect the cure of ague.

When Francis came to Meliapur, the city was full of Nestorians, this heresy having been imported from Mesopotamia and Persia together with the Syrian calendar and liturgy, which is still in use among these Hindu schismatics.

<sup>22</sup> Marco Polo, *Cathay*, Vol. II, p. 340.

<sup>23</sup> A. E. Medlycott, *India and the Apostle St. Thomas*, London, 1905, ch. iv.

<sup>24</sup> Medlycott, *op. cit.*, ch. iii.



As there was no hospital, Francis accepted the invitation of Gaspard Coelho, a priest who lived near the shrine in a house which has since been swallowed by the sea, together with a portion of the old town, whose ruins, observes Bishop Medlycott, can be seen on calm days lying under the waves.<sup>25</sup>

Xavier spent four months at Meliapur with Father Coelho, who in his deposition wrote that the saintly Master Francis used to eat at his table, and that they became great friends. He was always given to prayer and contemplation and spoke mostly of spiritual things. By his instructions and his holy life Francis effected much good in the town, augmenting the love of Jesus Christ among the people, who were attracted by his virtue and sanctity. He rescued many souls from mortal sin, especially by validating the marriages of those living in sin, settling disputes, and establishing the fear of God everywhere.<sup>26</sup> There is a very human touch in Coelho's relation where he says that Xavier often spoke about his early days in Navarre, of his

<sup>25</sup> When the Portuguese first came to Meliapur, they found a small stone chapel on a hill near the town walls. In repairing it they found a white marble slab, on which was a cross and inscription saying "That God was born of the Virgin Mary; and that this God was eternal; that the same God taught his law to his twelve Apostles; and that one of them came to Meliapur with a palmer's staff in his hand; that he built a church there; that the kings of Malabar, Coromandel, and Pandi, with many other nations submitted to the law preached by St. Thomas, a holy and penitent man." Spots of blood led to the inference that the Apostle had been martyred on this slab, which was placed on the altar when the chapel was rebuilt.

<sup>26</sup> Brou, I, 330 sq.

parents and family, and of the University of Paris, where the Saint remarked there was much wickedness, but that his disgust for vice saved him from contamination.

A great change was wrought by Francis among the profligate Portuguese, of whom there were a hundred families living at Meliapur.<sup>27</sup> Having heard of one man who was conspicuous for his scandalous life, Xavier went to his house and begged for a meal. The Portuguese invited him to his table, where Francis sat down taking no notice of the disreputable surroundings and treating the lady of the house with perfect courtesy as though she were his host's wife. His conversation was so interesting and edifying that the dissolute Portuguese, captivated by the Father's charm of manner, soon gave up his bad life and became a sincere penitent. Pagans flocked to hear the Apostle's sermons, and he converted and baptised many. Lax Christians were brought to a sense of their duties, so that in a short while the Sacraments were as much frequented as though it were Eastertide. It was a proverb in Meliapur that whoever did not follow Father Francis's advice, would die as an enemy of God, and this really occurred in the case of some who refused to amend their lives. On his departure Xavier remarked "that there was no more Christian town in the Indies than Meliapur, and that it would be a flourishing and prosperous city."

In May Francis wrote to Fathers Camerino and Borba at Goa, telling them of his visit to Meliapur,

<sup>27</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, p. 387.

where at the shrine of St. Thomas he sought to know God's will about his projected mission. Now that he knew he should go to Malacca, he had drawn up in Malayan the articles of faith, certain prayers, and a form of general confession to be used until the converts could have priests who knew their language. The Fathers then wintering at Mozambique, and some others, were to go to Ceylon with the young princes now being educated at the college of Santa Fè. Francis himself was so determined to fulfill God's will that if he could find no Portuguese ship, he was ready to go in a Moorish bark. Indeed he had such faith in God that he would have sailed on a catamaran (native raft). He intended leaving Meliapur in August, and wished the Fathers to send him a small breviary and a letter from the Viceroy to the Governor of Malacca, desiring him to furnish a ship and what else was necessary for the voyage. From Malacca he would write about the Christians there, so that missionaries should be sent to spread the faith; since the house bearing the name of "Santa Fè" should justify its name by its works.<sup>28</sup>

Francis had no difficulty in choosing a Portuguese vessel for his voyage, as there was regular intercourse between Meliapur and Malacca, the former city exporting fine cotton stuffs which were in demand all over Hindustan and also in Lisbon. Francis departed in one of these trading vessels, the people of Meliapur escorting him to the quay, begging his blessing and hoping he would soon return. He was accompanied

<sup>28</sup> *Monum. Xav.*, p. 385.

by Joam d'Eyro, once a soldier and later a wealthy merchant, who had given all his money to the poor and went to Malacca with Francis as a catechist.

## CHAPTER VI

### VOYAGES IN FURTHER INDIA

#### § I. SOJOURN IN MALACCA

While on board the trader to Malacca, Francis found the crew and passengers addicted to gambling. By his kindness in procuring money for a soldier who was on the point of suicide, from despair at the loss of all he had possessed, he induced the unhappy man to renounce the vile passion which imperiled his salvation.

It is not known how the report of Xavier's presence on board the trader reached Malacca, but the vessel had scarcely made its appearance, when the whole population, including children, assembled on shore to welcome "the great Father." On landing, the Saint caressed and blessed the infants presented by their mothers. Many houses were opened to receive him, but he preferred to reside at the hospital, where he resumed his care of the sick. As he wrote to his brethren in Portugal, Malacca was a great sea-port, where he always found plenty to do, preaching and attending to other missionary duties. Much of his time was spent translating Latin prayers into the Macassar dialect, which he found very difficult as he did not know the language well. He was thinking of proceeding at once to Macassar, on his way to the Molucca Islands, but the Governor informed him that an excellent priest was now at Macassar, and that it was

better to wait until reliable news from there could be transmitted to Malacca. As these islanders had no idols, they were likely to make good Christians.

The city of Malacca then ranked as an important trading centre and port. It was situated on a promontory and had only a narrow connection with the mainland. From its wealth, its extensive commerce, and population made up of different nationalities, it was said to have been known to the ancients as "Aurea Chersonesus" or Golden Chersonese. When the Portuguese seized this rich Malayan port in 1511, it was ruled by a Mohammedan sultan, and was frequented by ships from Japan, China, Java, Bantu, and other isles of the Indian Archipelago; not omitting those coming from Hindustan. These vessels were laden with gold, pepper, spices, and other valuable merchandize. Though so near the Equator, this country was more temperate than India, having perpetual spring weather and no extremes. When Xavier arrived there, the prosperity of Malacca far exceeded most Eastern centres of population, but on the other hand religion and morality were at a low ebb among the inhabitants, composed mostly of rich Mussulmans, pagans, and Portuguese. The populace were given over to dissolute living to such an extent that an old writer thought no Christians could exist in such an environment.<sup>1</sup> Francis passed four months at Malacca, preaching penance to people who had nearly forgotten the meaning of that word. His gentle and attractive manners made a deep impression upon

<sup>1</sup> Polanco, *Vita S. Ign.*, VI, 806 sq.

all who came in contact with him, and by his persuasive influence he extinguished many scandals and abuses. Universal was the admiration excited by the conversion of a celebrated Jewish rabbi,<sup>2</sup> his cures of the sick, and the restoration to life of two dying persons, one of whom was a brother of Xavier's staunch friends, Rodrigo and Diego de Pereira.<sup>3</sup> God revealed to his faithful servant the woes which would befall Malacca on its relapse into sin. Wars and pestilences some years later devastated this Malayan city, which at the present day is much decayed, Singapore having taken its place in the Straits as the British mercantile centre.

In the evenings, with the children attending his catechism classes, Francis used to go through the streets, ringing his bell and calling aloud, "Pray to God for those who are in mortal sin, and for the souls

<sup>2</sup> This rabbi was a very learned man, who had held Francis in the greatest scorn, mocking at his sermons and attributing his holiness to hypocrisy. Francis, hearing all this, was sorry for the Jew's blindness, and having implored the divine help, called at the rabbi's house to beg a meal. Through human respect and pride the Jew did not like to refuse so well known a man, but he showed no great courtesy as they sat down to table. While avoiding any allusion to religion, the Saint made himself so agreeable and amiable during dinner that he softened his unwilling host's heart, and the rabbi actually ended by exacting a promise that Xavier would come back to see him. By degrees the rabbi became attached to his guest and was led on to conversion and baptism. Bartoli, *Vita*, Vol. I, ch. x, pp. 181-89; *Process. Can.*, 1556, Goa, n. 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Process.* 1556, Baçaim, n. 5; *Process.* 1616, n. 4. Neither of these miracles is mentioned in the Bull of Canonization. (Brou, I, 362 sq.)

who are suffering in Purgatory." He made friends with the rough soldiers of the garrison, and when out of respect they stopped their sports, he would cheerfully urge them to go on. He sometimes said he would not mind joining them, as they were soldiers and not obliged to live like friars; and when God was not offended, it was better to enjoy oneself than to grumble and commit other sins. He also visited their houses, shared their meals, and praised the cooking. He showed the same bright and gracious manner to merchants and others, so that down to the servants and slaves every one loved the gentle Saint.

In a letter to Father Camerino, sent in December, Francis said that, as it was not expedient to visit Macassar, he was going to Amboina, where there were many Christian natives and better prospects of converting the heathen. He requested the newly arrived missionaries, Fathers Criminale<sup>4</sup> and Beira, to go at once to Cape Comorin, where they would be more useful than at Goa. If Father Mansilhas was at Goa, they should take him with them, he having experience of that region.<sup>5</sup>

## § 2. VISIT TO THE MOLUCCA ISLANDS

With his catechist Joam d'Eyro, Francis sailed on

<sup>4</sup> Antonio Criminale, the first martyr of the Society of Jesus, was born at Sisi, near Parma. For four years he was superior of the mission among the Paravers, until he was killed by the Badagas at Punical on the Fishery Coast, in 1549. Shortly before his death, at the altar, he had a vision (also witnessed by his congregation) of the sacred Host covered with blood, which he regarded as a warning of his approaching martyrdom.

<sup>5</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, pp. 393-96.



Jan. 1st, 1546, for the Moluccas. Though the vessel was commanded by Portuguese, most of the crew were idolators; but during the voyage they were converted and baptised by the Apostle. The journey was not without its perils, such as pirates, hidden reefs, and storms, which caused much weeping, but, as Francis wrote to his Roman brethren, God perhaps wished to try them and to let them feel what they were if they relied more on their own strength than on Him.<sup>6</sup> When the pilot feared he had overshot Amboina, Xavier with a smile assured him and the captain that they now were in the gulf and would sight the isle at dawn the next day, which occurred as he foretold. Not only did the ship arrive on the 6th of February to disembark the Saint, but the wind enabled it to pursue its route to Banda.<sup>7</sup>

As Francis and some others were rowing ashore in a boat, they saw two galleys belonging to pirates plundering the coast. The sailors wanted to return to the ship, but the corsairs suddenly disappeared as if they were being chased by some foe, and reassured by Francis, the sailors brought him safely into the harbor.

Amboina belonged to the Moluccas or Spice islands. It lay near the Equator and was inhabited by people resembling the Malayan race in appearance and customs. They understood Malayan, although speaking their own dialects. They were mostly Mohammedans with a large sprinkling of pagans. The Portuguese

<sup>6</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, p. 401.

<sup>7</sup> *Process.* 1556, Cochin, n. 7 and 16.

had two forts, one on the isle of Ternate and the second at Amboina, where there was an enormous trade in cloves and other spices abounding in those islands. The Christians of seven villages were so only in name. They had been baptised in 1537 but knew nothing of their religion, the priest being dead some time. Francis devoted himself to the spiritual needs of these Christians and of the garrison stationed at Amboina. He found the natives docile and fervent, baptised the new-born infants and received many pagans and Mohammedans into the Church. Here, too, he befriended the soldiers in order to persuade them to lead good lives.

When a Spanish fleet arrived at Amboina after an unsuccessful attempt to seize some of the Indian islands, and a pestilence broke out on board, Francis collected medicines and food and instructed these rough filibusterers in their religious duties, long neglected. He also assisted the dying and helped to bury them after death. The crews of Portuguese vessels, equally devastated by the pestilence, were treated with the same kindness, and so great was his zeal that he made innumerable conversions and even induced the Portuguese ashore to forget their enmity towards the Spaniards, whom they loaded with provisions and other necessities on their departure from the Moluccas. Among those who gave alms to Francis was a rich merchant, Joam de Araujo, who one day, in giving wine for the sick, told Xavier's messenger not to return for any more, as he wanted to keep what he had remaining for himself. When this was repeated to

Francis, he said: "Does Araujo think he will drink his wine himself? Tell him to continue his alms for the love of God, because he will die soon, and his wealth will go to the poor." Joam goodnaturedly accepted the reproof and prepared himself for death. He died soon afterwards, and as he had no heirs, the poor inherited his property.<sup>8</sup>

Letters were written to Fathers Camerino, Beira and Criminale, ordering Beira to go to Malacca with Mansilhas and to bring vestments and two tin chalices, which would be safer than silver among the perverse natives of the islands. Francis added that he was starting to visit the "Moro" islands, which, as he told his Roman brethren, were sixty miles from Malacca,<sup>9</sup> and were subject to frequent earthquakes and volcanic outbursts. The people were ferocious and extremely treacherous, while in some of the isles there were cannibals who ate prisoners of war and aged relatives. The Christians there were utterly ignorant of their faith and had reverted to primitive barbarism. Consequently the Apostle, at the risk of life, determined to go there. His friends implored him not to go among such savages and many offered him antidotes against the poisons often administered by these natives. He refused them all, pleasantly adding, "lest to the burden of these remedies should be added the burden of fear"—which he hitherto had escaped.

<sup>8</sup> *Process.* 1556, Goa, n. 16; cfr. *ibid.*, n. 12.

<sup>9</sup> There is great difficulty about locating these "Moro" islands, or "islands of the Moors." See Coleridge, Vol. I, p. 398.

Their prayers, he thought, would be far better safeguards for his preservation.

Francis wrote that Portuguese ships went every year from Malacca to China, and he had asked the traders to collect information concerning the Chinese, especially if there were any Jews or Christians, as there was proof that St. Thomas had been there and had converted many of these people. It is evident that Francis was even then thinking of extending his labors in this direction. On the way with his catechist Joam d'Eyro to the "Moro isles," it is said, Francis during a storm held his crucifix in the troubled waters, whereupon the waves subsided, but the crucifix to his grief slipped from his hand into the sea. The next day, as is related in the acts of his canonization, when walking on the shore, a crab came out of the water holding the crucifix in its claw, and laying it at the Saint's feet.<sup>10</sup> This may seem rather a quaint legend, but we must remember that the witnesses "were men and women of their own time and not savants of our time."<sup>11</sup>

Numerous were the miracles wrought by our Saint on the different islands he visited as he journeyed to

<sup>10</sup> Bohours, *Vie*, Vol. III.

<sup>11</sup> Andrew Lang, *The Maid of France*, Pref., p. 10. On this alleged miracle see Brou, I, 379, Father Delehaye, S.J., thinks (see *The Legends of the Saints*, tr. by V. M. Crawford, London, 1907, p. 30), that "the story of the crucifix dropped into the sea by St. Francis Xavier and brought to land by a crab is simply borrowed from Japanese mythology." The Japanese legend is related by A. B. Mitford, *Tales of Old Japan*, London, 1871, pp. 40 sq.

the "Moros," and the conversions which resulted. The Portuguese settlers at the factory of Ternate were even worse than those at Malacca, but during the three months Francis spent there, he converted numbers of colonists and natives. So great was the restitution of ill-gotten gains and so plentiful were the alms given to Francis, that the Misericordia Hospital at Ternate became the richest and finest in all the Indies. One man built a college for Portuguese and Malayan children.

Among Francis's converts was the widow of the last king of Ternate. She was a Mohammedan, justly irritated by the bad treatment of the colonists who had deprived her of the regency, after being hospitably received by her. The dethronement and murder of her sons had embittered her still further against these perfidious and cruel adventurers. Francis went to see this much wronged princess, consoled her, and persuaded her to become a Christian, baptising her by the name of Isabel. He directed her in the ways of perfection, in which this holy convert found comfort in her dreadful trials. Because of her humble patience and charitable works she was soon held in the greatest esteem by those who knew her.

### § 3. THE "MORO" ISLANDS, AND MALACCA AGAIN

When Francis reached the "Moro" Isles, he devoted himself to the savage inhabitants, teaching them the doctrines of the true faith. He found the islands sterile and hilly, having neither corn, wine nor any

meat save that of wild boars; spring water was scarce, while rice and breadfruit trees abounded, as well as others giving a kind of wine, and palms whose filaments were woven into garments. The inhabitants were mostly pagans, whose greatest pleasure consisted in killing strangers, and when the supply of victims ran short, they often murdered their own women and children. There were also many Christians. One of the "Moro" group was subject to earthquakes, and its mountain range was in continual irruption, though Francis had not yet witnessed any of the fearful storms during which the fall of ashes made the people look like so many demons seeking shelter. When the natives asked him the meaning of these prodigies, he told them they were an emblem of hell where all idolators would go. One day, as he was saying Mass,—it was the feast of St. Michael, the Archangel—there came an earthquake which made him fear the altar would fall to pieces. "Perhaps," he wrote, "St. Michael was seizing and sending to hell the demons of these parts, who were hindering the service of God."<sup>12</sup>

During this mission Francis remarked that he had never felt less fatigue or experienced greater spiritual comfort, surrounded though he was by enemies, in a country devoid of all remedies in sickness and even of food needful to sustain life. Therefore he thought that these islands deserved to be called islands of Hope rather than islands of the Moor.

On returning to Ternate, Francis passed three months evangelising the people. Twice a week dur-

<sup>12</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, p. 428.

ing Lent he held a conference for the wives of the Portuguese, converted Moslems and pagan women, who had been baptised only on occasion of their marriage, and knew little of Christianity. He catechised these women and prepared them to approach the Sacraments at Easter. At this time Francis wrote out in his own hand an explanation of Christian doctrine in the Malayan tongue, which he gave to the natives before his return to India, to be repeated aloud in the churches every Sunday and holy-day. The brethren of the Misericordia were to send a member every night through the streets ringing a bell and reminding the people to pray for sinners and the souls in Purgatory. This was evidently a favorite devotion with the Father. Moreover he chose several native youths whom he judged suitable for the priesthood after a course of studies. At Amboina he again spent a little time and built a small chapel for the ignorant crews of Portuguese ships, whom he instructed.

On resuming his voyage to Malacca, Francis was urged to embark on board the "Capitano," reckoned to be the best vessel in the port. But he refused the offer, and being asked the reason, replied that this ship would have a dangerous passage, as God wished to punish the sins of those on board. The ship actually met with many perils and nearly foundered in the Saben strait. Though there is no mention made in the correspondence, it is supposed that the Apostle, as he had originally intended, visited Macassar on this journey to Malacca, for in the acts of canonization it is deposed that he baptised the king, his son, and a

number of the islanders. Reaching Malacca in July, 1547, Francis was met by Fathers Beira, Ribera, and two Brothers, who were the first members of the Society from home whom Xavier saw in the Far East. Father Mansilhas, however, had not obeyed the summons. Although this missionary possessed many good qualities, Francis lost no time in expelling him from the Society, preferring to have a good worker less than to keep a disobedient member in an order whose mainspring is implicit obedience to God and superiors.<sup>13</sup>

As the trading fleet did not sail to the Moluccas for two months, Francis profited by the delay to train his new missionaries in their duties, while continuing his own work at Malacca until a ship should be ready to carry him. Some Moors, as the Portuguese always called the Mohammedans, having tried to seize Malacca, Francis encouraged the citizens to resist the invaders, and the Moors retreated with only one goose as their spoil. A pursuing fleet cut the pirates to pieces and captured some of their vessels. During the absence of the Portuguese, Malayan sorcerers assured the people that the fleet had perished, but Francis reproved them for their lack of faith and asked them to recite a Pater and an Ave as thanksgiving for the great victory just gained over the infidels. No ship had yet been seen, nor had any news reached the city. But a

<sup>13</sup> Father Mansilhas deeply lamented his disobedience and expulsion. He remained as a secular priest on the Indian mission and at the hour of death found much comfort in being assisted by Jesuit Fathers.



few days later in sailed the triumphant fleet, and Francis and the people went out to congratulate the soldiers.<sup>14</sup>

The event referred to was the attack on Malacca by sixty ships of the Sultan of Acheen, in the island of Sumatra, who was jealous of the Portuguese supremacy in a country so near his own. To show that the victory was due to God, Francis, crucifix in hand, went down to the harbor from the church of our Lady of the Mount. This church, now in ruins, was very dear to the Saint, being situated on a hill whence there was a fine view of the red-roofed city, the mouth of the river, and the port full of shipping. Further out to sea, the eye was caught by the sight of an island here and there, rising from the clear waters of the Strait. Towards the interior of the peninsula could be seen rice-fields, palm-groves and woods, in which, half-hidden by tropical foliage, were the brown thatched houses of the natives. On the far horizon the distant hills are often veiled by mist or clouds.

In April Francis met some trustworthy merchants who spoke to him of the recently discovered islands of Japan, where they thought the faith could be spread more successfully than in other parts of the Indies, because the Japanese had a greater desire for knowledge. These merchants had been accompanied by a Japanese named Angero (Yajiro, Anjiro, d'Auxey),<sup>15</sup> who came in search of St. Francis, being much troubled in mind about his sins. On their arrival at Malacca, the

<sup>14</sup> Cros, ch. 25, p. 409.

<sup>15</sup> Brou, I, 429 sqq.

Saint was absent in the Moluccas, and Angero started on his way home. But his ship nearly perished in the gale and he put back to Malacca. Hearing that Xavier had just arrived there, Angero lost no time going to see him, and was, of course, received with courtesy and kindness. Being sufficiently acquainted with Portuguese, Angero wrote out all the articles of faith which Francis explained to him, and also prayed a great deal in the church. Although Francis knew by revelation that Angero was to be the first fruit of the new mission soon to be undertaken in Japan, he would not baptise this convert despite his earnest entreaties, desiring that he and his two servants should first be thoroughly instructed at the college of Santa Fè. Francis would have wished to travel with Angero, but his usual consideration for other people's feelings made him decide that the Japanese should not be separated from his Portuguese friends. He therefore proposed to meet them at Cochin about ten days later. Desiring to revisit the Fishery Coast before his return to Goa, Francis embarked on another ship lying in the port of Malacca, where he had just spent four months. His catechist, Joam d'Eyro, had already gone back to Goa, where he entered the Franciscan Order, in which he led a holy life and died a happy death.

#### § 4. RETURN TO THE FISHERY COAST AND GOA

During this voyage, Francis, who ever seemed to be pursued by stormy weather at sea, was in great peril, as the vessel nearly foundered in the Strait of Ceylon. The cargo was thrown overboard to lighten the ship.

While many wept and vowed never to go sailing again if God would save them, the Apostle calmly heard confessions and told them to beg God's assistance and be resigned to His holy will, whatever might happen. He then went into his cabin and began to pray, invoking the intercession of Peter Le Fèvre and other deceased members of the Society. Meanwhile the vessel was driving on the Ceylon sandbanks. Francis Pereira came to warn Xavier, who rose and, asking the pilot to give him the sounding line and plummet, let them down into the raging waves, saying: "Great God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, have mercy on us." The ship then ceased its perilous drifting, wind and waves subsided, and the voyage was continued without further mishap.

The Saint does not appear to have met either Angero, the Japanese, or the Fathers of the mission at Cochin, where he arrived in January, 1548, for in his letter to Rome, dated Jan. 20th, he says that he had been eight days at Cochin without seeing any of his brethren, so that he could furnish no reports. He ended by saying that whenever he began to talk about the Society he could never leave off speaking on such a delightful subject, but now he was compelled to stop because the ships were starting. Therefore, "I do not think I could do better than to avow to all the members of the Society: '*Si oblitus unquam fuero tui [Societas Jesu] oblivioni detur dextera mea,*' i. e., If I forget thee, Society of Jesus, let my right hand be forgotten." In another, shorter epistle Francis enclosed to Ignatius an account of China and Japan obtained

from a merchant who had been some time in the latter country. Ignatius thus could judge what missionaries were best fitted to be sent to this new mission. Francis added he was not yet sure whether he would go to Japan or send two other Fathers, but that he was inclined to go himself. In a letter to the King of Portugal he again mentioned the disgraceful abuses reigning in the Eastern colonies, which he thought could be remedied by threats of severe penalties upon officials failing in their duty. Were this done, the Apostle was sure that in the space of a year all the chiefs of Ceylon and Cape Comorin and Malacca would be converted. Francis observed how he had met the Bishop of Goa making a visitation at Cochin, notwithstanding his infirmities, and expressed his edification at the patience displayed by the prelate against whom some people were spreading scandalous reports respecting the death of Miguel Vaz.<sup>16</sup>

Francis now went back to the Fishery Coast, where the Paravers were delighted to see their "great Father" once more. At Manapur he gave a retreat to the Fathers and brothers of the mission, exhorting them to patience and fervor in their apostolate and impressing upon them the maxims and spirit of their founder. They were to study the Malabar language, of which Father Henriquez, who possessed a special gift for languages, was enjoined to compile a gram-

<sup>16</sup> The death of the worthy Miguel Vaz (supposed to have been poisoned at Chaul by Portuguese, whom as Inquisitor he had punished for their misdeeds) was imputed to the jealousy of Bishop Albuquerque. (*Mon. Xav.*, p. 454; cfr. Brou, II, 6 sqq.)

mar and vocabulary. This he accomplished in so short a time that it astonished the natives, who knew he had not had much practice in the use of their idioms. Francis Xavier also caused his Malayan Christian Doctrine to be translated into Malabar for the Paravers.

Before he left Manapur, the Saint drew up for his missionaries a long letter of instruction as to the proper method of spreading the Gospel; laying special stress on the baptism of infants and the catechising of children. He warned the Fathers to interfere as little as possible in the disputes of the natives, but to refer them to the local Portuguese commandant or to their headmen. If the people insisted on the priest being arbitrator, they were to apply to the superior, Father Criminale. The missionaries were to try and acquire the esteem of the natives, as they could be much more useful if they were beloved than if they were feared by the people. As far as discipline would allow, they were to be indulgent with the children attending the catechism, so as not to excite aversion but affection in their young minds. Natives were not to be reproved before the Portuguese, but were to be defended and protected as far as possible from ill treatment. The Portuguese should be asked to bear in mind the imperfect education of these poor people only just converted to Christianity. The native Malabar priests were to be treated with the utmost kindness and charity, the governor was to be conciliated by deference and respect, and all other Portuguese were to be met with courtesy and no dislike ever betrayed towards them. In fine, the missionaries were to be gracious

and obliging to everybody, so as to gain the good will of all, and they were ever to address people in a modest, amiable way, "for benevolence in deeds, rendered more attractive by courteous words, will make you generally liked, and will open all hearts to you, giving you marvellous influence and enabling you to obtain many spiritual advantages."<sup>17</sup>

Passing through Travancore, Francis went over to Ceylon, where he converted the king of Candy and visited the king of Jafnapatam, who promised to become a Christian if he could be a vassal of the Portuguese monarch, and if the Viceroy would give him Portuguese soldiers. Though he sent an envoy with Xavier to the Viceroy, this tyrannical king soon repudiated all his promises, as might have been expected. Accompanied by the envoy, Francis Xavier sailed to Goa, which he reached in March, 1548, after an absence of three years in the Malayan Archipelago.

### § 5. SECOND SOJOURN IN HINDUSTAN

At the college of Santa Fè Francis was delighted to find Fathers Nicholas Lancilotti, Francis Perez, and others of the Society, who, having arrived from Europe, were able to give him much-longed for news of his Father Ignatius and his friends at Lisbon and Rome. As the want of letters had been so keenly felt by Francis during the many months spent among the Malayans, he must have listened eagerly to all that the newcomers had to tell about Ignatius, Rodriguez, and the Apostolic work going on in Italy, Lisbon, and

<sup>17</sup> Pagès, *Lettres*, Vol. I, p. 274.

Coimbra. Now he could hear every detail of Father Le Fèvre's happy end, of the progress being made by the sons of St. Ignatius in Italy, Spain, France, the Netherlands, and Germany. Long conversations were held with Fathers Camerino and Borba on the affairs of the Society in Hindustan, and with joyful interest the Saint must have noted the new college buildings at Goa and the great increase of pupils since he last was there. Once more he resumed his usual routine, beginning with daily Mass at dawn in the church of Santa Fè, then visits to the poor and sick in the city, as well as to benefactors and friends of the Society. Whether at this period or at another the following strange incident occurred is not known, but it appears that one day in the confessional at Goa, Francis suddenly went out of the church, and after many turns in the town, without knowing where he went, met a stranger, and having embraced him, took him to the college. There the man who had been about to hang himself in despair brought out the halter he carried and gave it to the Saint, who consoled him, kept him some time at the college, and then dismissed him with a sum of money for his family.<sup>18</sup> This is only one of the innumerable instances of Francis's ardent charity; he invariably bestowed all the alms given him upon the poor. In this way he frequently assisted families who had fallen into poverty and saved destitute girls who might have gone astray but for the means of subsistence provided by the Saint.

Francis subsequently went to Baçaim to visit

<sup>18</sup> Dryden.

the new Viceroy, Joam de Castro. This nobleman, remarkable for his piety and excellent character, was delighted to see the missionary of whom he had heard so much, and granted all his requests. While staying at Baçaim, Francis met Rodriguez de Siqueira (Secheira), a young man of noble birth, who, having murdered someone at Malacca, fled to sanctuary in a church to escape punishment. Francis had persuaded Siqueira to confess his sins and obtained a pardon for him on condition that he leave the East, where he was in the company of men worse than himself. Instead of fulfilling his promise, Siqueira had secured a post at Baçaim, where he continued his dissolute career. Seeing Francis before him in the middle of the public square, he thought to brazen out his misconduct by kissing the Saint's hand. But Francis gravely asked him: "Is it thus, my son, you have fulfilled your promise to me, and does the protection of the governor enable you to live like a beast deprived of reason, spending two years without confessing your sins? Really we can never be friends so long as you remain the enemy of God." At this unexpected revelation Siqueira was smitten with the bitterest remorse, and this time his conversion was sincere and lasting.<sup>19</sup>

The Viceroy, being obliged to stay at Baçaim, wished to keep the Apostle with him, but as this could not be done, made him promise to remain at Goa for the winter.

Going back to Goa, Francis found a Spanish priest,

<sup>19</sup> Brou, II, 30 sq.



whom he knew at Amboina, on board the fleet from New Spain. Torres would have been glad to join Xavier, had he not feared the hardships of a missionary life. He therefore went to Goa, where the Bishop gave him a parish. But not satisfied with this post, he threw it up and made a retreat at the college under Father Lancilotto. Francis, knowing that Torres was a good preacher and really had a missionary vocation, admitted him into the Society. To his friend Diego de Pereira he lamented that his promise to the Viceroy would prevent him seeing Diego before his voyage to China. However he meant the following year to go to Japan, where he was convinced the faith of Jesus Christ would make great strides.

On Whitsunday Francis saw his Japanese converts baptised by the Bishop of Goa, Angero taking the name of Paul de Santa Fè. These converts had been well instructed at the college, where they learnt to read and write the Roman letters, and could read religious works as well as the Psalms and Latin prayers. Angero informed Francis that for a long time there existed in Japan a vague rumor, like a prophecy, of the coming of strangers to preach a more perfect religion.

The Apostle at this period passed long hours in prayer and contemplation. At the same time he did not omit his visits to hospitals and jails, nor the catechising of children and slaves. One day he came across a Portuguese soldier, who was as vicious as he was brave. An expedition was on the point of starting for Aden, at the entrance of the Red Sea, and this man was among the troops sent on service. Hearing

this, Francis took his breviary and followed his new acquaintance on board, to the delight of the captain (who happened to be a son of the Viceroy) and his officers. But they saw very little of the "great Father," who during the voyage, heedless of the murmurs raised at his taking any notice of such a ruffian, devoted himself chiefly to this disreputable soldier. Francis looked on at his gambling, which often lasted all night; he never seemed to hear his awful language, while occasionally he would let fall some remarks to his very unpromising acquaintance about the duties of religion and the salvation of his soul. One day the Saint kindly asked the man how long it was since he had been to confession. The soldier replied, eighteen years, and explained that a Goanese priest had treated him so harshly that he would never go again. Francis agreed that such severity was annoying, but he had his own reasons for reconciling the soldier with God, and therefore was ready to hear his confession when the fleet should halt at Coulam. Francis then went ashore with his penitent, heard his confession, and gave him a Pater and Ave as penance. Thereupon the Saint went aside and gave himself a severe discipline with an iron chain in atonement for the man's crimes. The repentant sinner, overhearing the lashes, ran to Xavier and insisted on sharing the penance. He then continued the voyage to Aden, an altered man, while the Apostle returned to Goa. Father Bartoli adds that this soldier entered a religious order and lived and died serving God.

Francis was summoned by the Viceroy, who had

just reached Goa from Baçaim, in a dying state. In a few weeks a fever brought Joam de Castro to his end. He was much consoled by the constant presence of Francis, who administered the last sacraments to this excellent and upright governor and prayed by his deathbed until all was over.

Now free from his promise, Francis decided to visit the Fishery Coast again, but as the monsoon did not appear till September, pursued his usual life at Goa. Before starting for the Fishery Coast he had the satisfaction of welcoming five missionaries of the Society, who had just come from Portugal. Among them Father Gaspard Barzeus (Barzée), who, in his report home, wrote that "Master Francis was at Goa about to embark for Cape Comorin, but being informed of our arrival, did not wish to leave without seeing us and hearing news of the Society. As soon as the ship anchored, he sent us refreshments, desiring we should land as soon as possible, because he was anxious to see us. We did so, and it would be impossible to express our joy at the kindness of Master Francis, and in hearing him praise God when we made our reports, or when he related all that our Lord by means of the Society had accomplished here and elsewhere."

At this stage of Francis Xavier's career the following description given by one who had met him for the first time will be found interesting. "He is a man neither very short nor very tall. He has a fine presence, though there is nothing that would attract special attention. An open face, with eyes constantly upraised and dimmed by tears, lips smiling. His words

are few, but they can affect one to tears. You will frequently hear him say, 'Jesus! Most Holy Trinity!' and exclaim: 'O my brethren and companions, how much better our God is than we imagine. Consider this and give Him praise. Return Him thanks, for if our holy Society has been confirmed in so short a time, about seven years, it is because our Lord wished to accomplish many things by its means. And soon you will see it in Japan, whither I am going.' Master Francis would say all this so fervently as to make us weep, and he spoke so lovingly as to encourage us to a great desire of suffering and labor. To this end he would relate details about his own work. The reputation he has acquired in the countries he has visited is indescribable; and so great is his life that his name is renowned throughout India, where a man deems himself fortunate if he be a friend of Father Francis." <sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Cros, *Vie*, ch. xxv, p. 411.

## CHAPTER VII

### VOYAGE TO JAPAN

#### § I. THE NEW PROJECT: LETTERS TO ST. IGNATIUS AND THE KING

Before his departure for Japan the Saint appears to have spent two months at Cochin, to the delight of his intimate friend, the Vicar Pedro Gonçalvez. Francis wrote to St. Ignatius, in Jan., 1549, that the Hindu races were so barbarous that the Society had hard work even with such of the natives as were Christians. The climate was very trying, owing to the great heats, winds, and rains. Food was scarce in the Moluccas, Socotra, and at Cape Comorin, while the mental and physical labors of the missionaries were enormous among people whose dialects were so hard to learn. Still more troublesome were the dangers to be avoided, both supernatural and natural. Yet, the missionaries were on good terms with the infidels, a thing which surprised every one.

Francis also thought that no constraint excepting that of brotherly love and charity should prevail in the Society of Jesus, in which nobody should be kept against his will, while those unsuited should be forthwith dismissed. The Society, he considered, should be a union of charity and of souls, free from servile fear and harshness. It could not be recruited solely from

natives in India, but Christianity would only last as long as there were European priests. The mission stations, he reported, were at such distances from Goa that it was necessary to name a superior for each of the great missions. The Portuguese were only masters of the seas and coast fortresses. The majority of the natives were not at all inclined towards Christianity, and considered it a mortal affront to be asked to become Christians. Were the Portuguese more tolerant more conversions might be made. But the gentiles saw how the Christians were treated and naturally did not care to join them. By the ensuing passage it is evident that the difficulty of converting Jews or Mohammedans was quite as great as it is in our day; for Francis tell his "only Father" that he hoped much from his mission to Japan, where there were gentiles indeed, but neither Moors nor Jews, and where the people seemed curious to know something about God and other religious subjects. The Society would be able to do much good among such a race. He added that he thought of going first to the court of the king of Japan, and later to the universities where the Japanese studied. When he had examined Japanese literature and had seen the professors of these universities, he would send full details to the University of Paris, who could communicate them to other European universities. He intended to start in April with the Japanese converts and the Valencian priest Cosmo Torres, stopping on the journey at Malacca and China. If Ignatius permitted it, Francis thought the arrival of Rodriguez and others of the Society in India would

be of much use to the colleges, the native Christians, and the converts. He also begged Ignatius to write a general letter of spiritual advice to his sons in the East and an encouraging one to Father Henriquez at Travancore, who did more than two men, knowing, as he did, how to speak and write the Malabar dialect. He was much loved by the Christians for his sermons and instructions, all delivered in their own language.

Again did our Saint pathetically allude to his longing for letters, so seldom gratified, owing to the difficulties of communication at that period. He implored Ignatius to let one of the Fathers write to him about the Society, its affairs, its progress, and the number of brethren who were newly professed. Letters could be forwarded by way of Malacca to Japan. This long epistle concluded by Francis telling "the Father of his soul" that he had written to him on his knees, and begged him to pray that he might know and perfectly fulfill God's will in this life. Francis sent Ignatius samples of Japanese written characters, which were so different from those used by other people. When he asked Paul Angero, why they did not write in the same way as Europeans, he replied, "Why do you not imitate us? As men have their heads above and their feet below; so in their writing they should employ perpendicular lines."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> One of the greatest modern authorities on Japan and things Japanese, Lafcadio Hearn, tells us in his work, *A Japanese Interpretation*, that "It is a noteworthy fact that Japanese mythology never evolved the ideas of an Elysium or a Tartarus—never developed the notion of a heaven or a hell. Even to this

Rodriguez, at Lisbon, was asked by Francis to send to Goa eight or ten casks of wine annually for the sacrifice of the Mass. Wine was very dear and often could not be procured at any price. All the Fathers at Malacca, etc., had to be supplied from Goa. The Chinese ports had been closed to the Portuguese, but Francis wrote this fact would not make him give up his voyage to Japan. He then wrote a letter to the King of Portugal, warning him "that the colonists and officials were treating the native Christians badly. The king of Jafanapatam was sending presents to His Majesty, but he was really an enemy of God, doing as much mischief as possible while pretending to be a vassal of John III. From past experience it seemed to Xavier that this man was likely to be more favored than the missionaries in Ceylon, because the King appeared to think more of the temporary riches of the Indies than of promoting the faith of Christ. He begged His Majesty to pardon his plain speaking, which was inspired solely by sincere affection and the thought of God's judgment. The King would know this at the hour of death, an experience which no

day Shinto belief represents the pre-Homeric stage of imagination as regards the supernatural. . . . In Shinto belief the good man became a beneficent divinity, the bad man an evil deity, but all alike were Kami Gods, having worship paid to them. At one time the whole Indo Aryan race had no other religion than this religion of spirits. The history of Japan is really the history of her religion. The ancient Japanese word for government, *matsuri-goto*, literally means 'matters of worship,' and in all matters the dead rather than the living have been the rulers of the nation and the shapers of its destiny." (Ch. ii, *An Ancient Cult.*)



one can escape, no matter how powerful he may be. As there was no hope of seeing the King's orders on behalf of the Christians obeyed in the colonies, Francis was going to Japan so as to waste no more time.<sup>2</sup>

Thus did the fearless Apostle address his sovereign, showing that however much he was indebted to his kindness and submissive to his authority, he would not shrink from telling him the truth, and holding him in some degree responsible for the evil conduct of his subordinates.

## § 2. IMMEDIATE PREPARATION FOR THE JOURNEY

Having returned to Goa to make preparations for his voyage to Japan, Francis assigned to his missionaries their stations in India and the Moluccas. Against his better judgment he permitted Barzeus to go to Ormuz in Persia, instead of Gomez, who was already proving himself to be anything but a success as rector of Santa Fè, to which post he had been assigned at the recommendation of Rodriguez. However, Xavier now took care to minimise his power considerably by naming his old companion, Father Camerino, general superior, or, as we should say, provincial, during his absence from Goa, warning him and

<sup>2</sup> The injustice and cupidity of the Portuguese always aroused the intense indignation of Francis Xavier. Eventually the evil treatment of the natives on the part of the rapacious colonists and the hordes of European adventurers who swarmed like locusts in the Indies, brought down the divine vengeance upon them.

Gomez to govern "without haughtiness or violence."<sup>8</sup>

Two years later St. Ignatius received a report in answer to his order from Father Lancilotti, describing Gomez's high-handed proceedings at Santa Fè College. Among other things he said that Gomez, though a worthy man, was so exceedingly zealous that it seemed that all the missionaries of the Society would require to be born over again to be able to comprehend the spirit of the Institute. He was just as exacting with the native students, setting them hours for prayer, contemplation, examens, etc., which Lancilotti knew they were incapable of keeping. He remonstrated with Gomez, who would not listen to him, with the result that as soon as Lancilotti went to Cochin, the native students ran away. This occurred before Francis came back from Cochin in November, 1548. Seeing how little fit Gomez was for his post, Francis deposed him and put some one else in charge of the students. He wished to send Gomez to Ormuz, but was prevented from doing this by the intercession of Cosmo Anes, the royal treasurer, with whom Gomez was intimate. As Anes had done so much for Francis, by administering the temporal affairs of the College, the Apostle granted his request and reinstated Gomez as rector, on condition that all the Fathers outside Goa should be under obedience to Father Paul del Valle, until Ignatius could send a professed Father to govern them all. Hence arose all the difficulties that prevailed under the rule of Gomez, who was unanimously con-

<sup>8</sup> Dryden, Bk. 4.

sidered to be unsuited for the position of rector.\*

Francis also gave to each missionary full written instructions as to his work, besides issuing a general letter on the subject similar to the one written for the Travancore Fathers.

It is said that at this time Francis used to implore the intercession of the Guardian Angels of Japan and China, when praying to know God's will concerning his projected voyage. As soon as he had become thoroughly convinced that God desired him to go, it was impossible to shake his determination, although his friends did their best to dissuade him. Their great affection made them regret his departure from India, where they thought he could not be spared. They reminded him of the long journey across turbulent seas; the treacherous typhoons, and, worst of all, the pirates, who infested these waters, especially the Malacca Straits. But Francis paid no attention to these objections. He was ready to face any danger, even death, provided he thereby fulfilled God's will. As he told Rodriguez, he was rather alarmed by the want of faith shown by his friends in their opposition to his projects.

### § 3. EMBARKATION FROM GOA

The affairs of the Society in India being settled, and the preparations for the voyage completed, Francis embarked, in April, 1549, with Father de Torres, Brother Joam Fernandez, and three Japanese, Paul Angero and his two servants, Joam and Antonio. They were accompanied, moreover, by Father de Castro

\* Cros, *Vie*.

and others of the Society going to the Moluccas. At Cochin, where a few days were spent, Father de Castro preached so well that the people asked Francis to leave him there, but as there were plenty of priests at Cochin, he refused the request. Eventually, after arduous Apostolic labors, Father de Castro was martyred in his distant mission.

The vessel, bound for Malacca, anchored there on May 31st, having escaped the dangers foretold by Francis' friends. On going ashore, he found letters from Portuguese merchants, then in Japan, who reported that a prince of that country wishing to become a Christian had sent envoys to the acting governor at Goa to ask for some Jesuits to teach the law of Christ to his subjects. It is supposed to have been the prince of Satsuma or the king of Bungo, but nothing certain is known on this point. The conversion had been produced in a singular way. By order of the prince some Portuguese merchants were lodged in a deserted house, generally believed to be haunted by demons,—a fact which was concealed from the Europeans. At night they were amazed to find themselves pulled about without seeing any one—and on one occasion they were startled by the cries of their servant. When they rushed to see what ailed him, he said he had seen a phantom, which frightened him and made him scream. They then put wooden crosses about the house, after which the mysterious disturbances stopped. The King then informed the merchants that the building had been infested by evil spirits and inquired what could be done to keep them away. The Portuguese re-

plied that the best remedy was the one they had adopted,—setting up crucifixes in the house. The natives, who were much troubled by diabolical manifestations, eagerly followed this advice. Having set up crosses in their dwellings, they were no longer molested.<sup>5</sup> The merchants told Francis that there was now a great opportunity of spreading the Gospel in these regions, where the people were so very sagacious, cautious, given to the exercise of reasoning, and always desirous of knowledge.

The governor and the people of Malacca gave Francis a regular ovation on his appearance in the city. He spoke to the governor about his journey to Japan, and Dom Pedro de Sylva offered his assistance, volunteering to equip a Portuguese ship at his own expense. But as none could be procured, the governor chose a junk belonging to a heathen Chinaman, who had settled at Malacca with his family. This man, in allusion to his former career as a pirate, was nicknamed “El Ladrao” (the robber). Dom Pedro, distrustful of a man with such antecedents, exacted a written pledge, in which “El Ladrao” consented to forfeit his wife and the whole of his worldly possessions, if he failed to land his passengers in Japan. The governor also gave

<sup>5</sup> It is well known, both from the teaching of the Church and from missionary reports of all ages, that in pagan lands, where the Gospel has not yet been preached, the power of the devil is greater than in Christian countries. However, the holy sacrifice of the Mass, and even the presence of priests or of souls in a state of grace, often dispels diabolical illusions and destroys the power of the demons.

Francis 200 pieces of gold to purchase presents for Japanese princes.

At this time the vicar of Malacca, Alfonso Martinez, who had led a careless life, was dying in despair after thirty years in the priesthood. Frightened at the approach of death by the knowledge of his sins, which he loudly declared, condemned him to hell, he gave way to fits of rage and was quite impenitent. Francis, hearing of this terrible case, hurried to Martinez's bedside, determined to obtain the grace of a Christian death for the unhappy man, who had been his friend. Prostrated on the ground, the Saint vowed to celebrate many masses in honor of the Blessed Trinity, the Mother of God, the angels and saints. Martinez presently recovered his self-control and confidence in Providence, his despair vanished like an evil dream, and after receiving the last Sacraments, he died invoking the name of Jesus.<sup>6</sup>

A passage in a letter written from Malacca to Father Beira, then superior of the Molucca Mission, shows how stern Francis could be when there was question of obedience to the rules of the Society. He ordered Beira to give him detailed information about all the brethren. If any one refused obedience, he was to be turned out and compelled to report himself, under pain of excommunication, to the Bishop, who would then become his immediate superior; "and this my order you will convey to all, so that, should they act to

<sup>6</sup> Tursellini, *De Vita Fr. Xav.*, 2nd ed., Antwerp, 1596, Vol. III, ch. xvii.

the contrary, they need not imagine that they still belong to our Society." <sup>†</sup>

To Fathers Camerino, Gomez, and Gago at Goa, Francis announced his arrival at Malacca and instructed them to send him reports of all that was being done. The Fathers and Brothers on the Indian missions were each and all to write to him, so that he might know how they were progressing in the service of God. All letters from Europe and India were to be addressed to Malacca, whence Father Perez would forward them to Japan. Father Gomez was admonished to be kind to the Dominicans and Franciscans and never to give them cause of disedification.

We see an instance of Francis' affectionate and practical interest in his friends in another letter to the Goa Fathers, wherein he tells them about a certain Christopher Carvalho, whom he had just induced to give up a roving life and to settle at Goa. As this man was virtuous, intelligent, rich, and unmarried, Francis thought he would make an excellent husband for the daughter of a great benefactress of the Society in India; and the Fathers were instructed to do all they could to promote this marriage.

To the Portuguese monarch Francis recommended the governor of Malacca for the benefits he had showered upon him and his companions. In compliance with the wish of the King, he enclosed a report on such of the colonial officials as had faithfully performed their duties.

Not wishing to mortify his old friend Rodriguez,

<sup>†</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, p. 517.

who had sent out the unfortunate Father Gomez to Goa, Francis, after telling about his contemplated voyage to Japan, wrote: "You would render a great service to God, if you could send some one who has already been rector at Coimbra, or who would be capable of fulfilling such a function:—some one whose conscience would not be upset by such a post, as you know the charge of commanding others is dangerous for those who are not quite perfect. What is required is a man who, with much sense and prudence, would know how to watch over the brethren in India, to treat the members of the Company properly, to help them, and to have compassion on their troubles. Antonio Gomez has much talent as a preacher, his sermons do much good, but he has not the qualities I desire in the superior of a college and of brethren. If he could be sent to preach at the fortresses he would be of great use."<sup>8</sup>

Among the documents in the *Monumenta Xaveriana*, though not included in the regular correspondence of 1549, are two memoranda which Francis wrote for the novice Joam Bravo at Malacca, on the method of meditation and the rule of life he should observe as a member of the Society of Jesus. At the bottom of the first document Bravo deposed that the Blessed Father Francis had given it to him in the hermitage of our Lady of the Mount, at Malacca, on the vigil of St. John's day, 1549, when he was going to Japan. In these memoranda the Saint impresses upon Bravo the absolute necessity of cultivating humility, obedience,

<sup>8</sup> Michel, *Vie*, Liv. 4, ch. ii, p. 275.



and self-conquest, without which "you cannot be useful to yourself or to others, nor be in favor with God, thereby rendering yourself incapable of persevering in the Society of Jesus."

To St. Ignatius, Francis wrote that he had been told by Angero and the other two converts that "the Fathers of the Japanese," as the Saint quaintly called the bonzes, would be much scandalised if they saw the missionaries eating meat or fish. Hence he was resolved to keep perpetual abstinence rather than give scandal. There were a goodly number of these "padres," who were highly regarded by the people, high and low, and it gave Francis much pleasure to hear from the Japanese Paul, that there was a monastery having many "friars" and learned men, who had a method of meditation of their own, which the Saint described minutely to Ignatius. These "padres" preached every fifteen days to large congregations of men and women, who — especially the women — wept at their description of hell and its torments, of which pictures were displayed. When the Apostle asked Paul whether he recollected any particular utterance of these preachers, Paul answered he once heard a "padre" say "that a bad man was worse than the devil, because he caused others to commit sins which he could not commit himself, such as robbery, bearing false witness, etc." This information raised high hopes in the ever optimistic and ardent mind of Francis Xavier. Hearing so much good of these unknown people, he thought it could not be long before the entire race would embrace the religion of

Jesus Christ, especially as some of their beliefs did not seem to differ much from Christian dogmas.

One of Francis Xavier's great pleasures during this visit to Malacca was the sight of his two missionaries, Father Perez and Brother Oliviera, working hard for the salvation of souls. Perez preached regularly on Sundays and feasts to the Portuguese, the slaves, and the natives, besides giving a sermon once a week to the women at Our Lady of the Mount, and instructed a great number of children every day in the chapel of the Misericordia Confraternity, and spent many hours in the confessional, hardly giving himself time to eat or sleep. Finding everything going on as favorably as he could expect in the Malacca Mission, Francis was at last ready to undertake the journey to Japan, which had so long been the object of his prayers and aspirations.

#### § 4. FINAL STAGE OF THE VOYAGE, AND ARRIVAL IN JAPAN

We are now approaching the most important (though in point of time the shortest) mission in Francis Xavier's career, when, as a pioneer of the Gospel, he sailed from Malacca for the then almost unknown Empire of Dai Nippon.

The islands of Japan had been discovered by Portuguese traders in 1542, the year in which our Apostle reached Hindustan. Until the arrival of the Portuguese the inhabitants of Japan had had intercourse only with China, and did not seem to be aware of the existence of other nations. Devoted to agriculture,

they were simple in their manners, endowed with a keen intellect and an ardent desire for knowledge. They had borrowed their religion from the Chinese, but it was much modified by the upspringing of sects. All adored the sun and moon, but in some other respects their beliefs and religious practices resembled those of Christians. Most of the bonzes or priests and the ecclesiastical students lived in monasteries; some studied at Bandu, where there was a kind of university, the chief study being that of Chinese and Japanese written characters, a little astronomy, and medicine, as well as the teachings of the different sects.<sup>9</sup> Probably some of these facts had already come to the knowledge of Francis; but at the same time he must have been filled with anxious curiosity to find out for himself what this distant nation was in character and religion.

Father Michel tells us that Japan went by different names: Eight Islands, Xingoca (the kingdom of genii or spirits), Yosocu (Oriental kingdom, or kingdom of the sun), etc. The Chinese called it Yego, meaning the spot whence the sun sets out on its daily journey to the West. The Japanese themselves commonly called their land *Tino moyo*, and in their literary language *Nifon* or *Nippon*—the beginning or birth of the sun. The Chinese pronounced this last name Japuen or Jopuen, whence the Portuguese evolved the word Japan. At first they dubbed these islands *Ilhas dos Ladroens* because the sea there was infested by pirates. The Castilians, knowing that there were

<sup>9</sup> Michel, *Vie*, p. 250.

rich silver mines to be found there, named them *Islas Platerias*.

A favorable monsoon was blowing as Francis left Malacca; but his gratification at the prospect of a swift voyage was soon marred by accidents and annoyances, the chief of which was the sight of a hideous idol, surrounded by burning joss sticks, to which the skipper and his crew continually offered sacrifices. The wily Chinese remained deaf to the Saint's reproofs and entreaties. A halt was made at an isle to bring on board extra rigging and rudders to meet the storms which often did much damage to vessels crossing the Chinese Sea. Thinking they would have a good passage, the Chinamen raised anchor; but as the junk was moving onward, the pagans bethought themselves of asking their oracle if they would have an equally safe return. By means of casting lots they found that they would reach Japan safely but would never see Malacca again. This intelligence led the crew to winter in China, to the grief of Francis, who believed that the men were completely under the influence of the devil. The weather now changed and the sea was running high off the coast of Cochin China, when a sudden movement of the boat threw the Chinese convert, Manoel, into the hold, which had been carelessly left open. As much water had come in, the man, falling head foremost, was nearly drowned. While Francis and his people were reviving Manoel on deck, another lurch of the clumsy vessel flung the skipper's daughter into the sea, which swept her far from reach

under the eyes of her frantic father. Loud and deep were his lamentations, until he and his crew besought their idol to tell them the cause of this piece of ill luck. The evil spirit was understood to say that the girl would have been safe, had Manoel been drowned in the hold. Far greater than the danger of the gale was now the peril of Francis and his companions, who were entirely at the mercy of superstitious pagans. But Francis remained undaunted, relying, as he always did, upon God's help. Soon the tempest ceased, the crew recovered their good humor, and in a few days the junk arrived at Canton. "El Ladrao" would have remained there during the winter, had not Francis threatened to report his conduct to the governor of Malacca. The skipper temporised matters by sailing to another port, where he intended to lay up his junk, but his purpose was frustrated by a small boat bringing him word that the port was full of pirates. Alarmed at this unwelcome news, the "Robber" tried to get back to Canton, but the wind blowing persistently in the direction of Japan proved too much for him. Sailing rapidly towards the Japanese coast, Francis was able to land on the feast of the Assumption, at Cangoxima, now Kagoshima, a port at the head of a beautiful though narrow bay running far inland among the volcanic hills of the southernmost island of Japan. Cangoxima being the native town of Paul Angero, Francis and his companions were hospitably received.<sup>10</sup> While Francis was at Cangoxima, Paul

<sup>10</sup> Father Michel in one of his notes tells us that the last descendant of the hosts of St. Francis Xavier and his two com-

Angero presented himself at the castle of his feudal chief, the prince of Satsuma, who was pleased to see him again and readily pardoned him for the crime he had committed, which had led to his flight from Japan. The description of his travels and conversion exciting the prince's curiosity, Paul seized the opportunity to explain the Christian doctrine and to show a picture of our Lady and the Infant Jesus painted on wood, which Francis had given him for the purpose. It made such an impression upon the prince and his courtiers that they kowtowed before it in native fashion. Then the image was sent to the prince's mother, who was equally interested.<sup>11</sup> In answer to her questions, Paul gave a brief account of the life of Christ, which she desired should be written out for her.

Francis soon was studying the native language, devoting many hours of the night to its acquirement. Still he was not yet able to make himself understood, and his interpreter Paul, not being a literary man, failed to explain clearly the Christian doctrine, which differed so widely from Japanese ideas. Therefore the first attempt to preach was a failure, exciting the ridicule of sceptical and jeering listeners. However,

panions was alive at the end of the 17th century. She was an excellent Christian. On account of her constancy in the midst of persecution, and to make some acknowledgment of the reception accorded by her and her family to St. Francis, the vice-provincial, Father Coelho, brought her to Nagasaki, where she lived some time, well cared for by the Society and the Christians. She died very happily and the Jesuit Fathers buried her with much solemnity. (*Vie*, Liv. IV, ch. ii, p. 279.)

<sup>11</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, n. 590, 596.

Francis redoubled his efforts, "learning Japanese," he himself wrote, "like little children learning to speak." His natural aptitude for languages, strengthened by an ardent desire to preach the Gospel, enabled him in a short time to comprehend what was said around him, so that he and his companions no longer were "like statues among the people who converse so much about us, while we are silent, not understanding their speech."

## CHAPTER VIII

### IN THE EMPIRE OF THE RISING SUN

#### § I. FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF JAPAN

Francis found the Japanese much the best of any of the Eastern nations he had seen. They were naturally intelligent, and he said he could understand their spirit of "Bushido" or the Way of the Samurai, *i. e.*, The Warrior Caste, which made them prefer honor to anything else in the world. He was pleased to see that poverty was not held in disrespect, and that a nobleman, like a Spanish *hidalgo*, was quite as much respected when poor as when rich. So greatly did the natives prize descent that no noble would marry a woman of inferior rank. With all their courtesy, both nobles and commoners prized their weapons, and even boys of fourteen carried daggers and scimitars. Francis noticed the extreme sobriety of the Japanese, who lived on rice and vegetables, reckoning corn, fish, and fruit as luxuries. Such frugality was rewarded by good health, and as there were plenty of old people about, it was evident that one could live very well on little food. Gambling and thieving were considered disgraceful, and robbery was punished by death. The fact that most people could read and write their own dialect facilitated the teaching of Christian doctrine. With the exception of some great vices, the Saint thought this nation was naturally disposed to virtue.



Knowledge seemed to be much esteemed, to judge by all he had been told about the universities in the Empire. There was a famous one at the capital containing fifteen colleges. There were five schools or academies attended by 3,500 students in the neighborhood, while the university at Bandu, already mentioned, contained more scholars than any other in the country.

Though, strictly speaking, there were no universities in the European sense, it has been ascertained that in A.D. 668 the Emperor Tienhi founded an educational establishment at Meaco, as well as schools in other provinces. In them were taught "The Four Paths of Learning" (Shi-do), including the Chinese classics, Chinese history, law and mathematics. The imperial example was followed by the Daimyos or "great nobles," who spared no expense in erecting schools, some of which were reserved for youths of certain clans. The Buddhist Bonzes or monks always had schools attached to their monasteries, and they were also employed as teachers in those founded by the Mikado and the Daimyos.

From the ninth to the twelfth century the Japanese passed through a species of *Renaissance*, which they called the Hara and the Heian epochs, during which they attained a remarkably high standard of learning and art. The schools were thronged; poetry, beautiful scenery, of which there is much in Japan, exquisitely woven garments, and other artistic products were all greatly esteemed. Though the lower castes remained uncouth, their superiors became so refined as to be quite effeminate, with a distaste for simple and frugal

living. From about the middle of the twelfth century, up to the period of St. Francis' arrival in Japan, there raged almost continual civil wars, caused by dynastic factions bitterly opposed to each other. In such warring times the schools and academies, of course, fell into decay. The arts and luxuries of life were neglected. A military spirit pervaded the whole nation. Rigid discipline and frugality became the order of the day among the "Buke" or military nobles under their Shogun, as opposed to the "Kuge" or court nobles under the Mikado. The Samurai, or warriors, were devoted to their chiefs, whom they served with fidelity and self-sacrifice. "Bushido," literally the Way of the Samurai (but also meaning the principle of renunciation on behalf of one's country), rose to great honor in those troublous times — when simplicity, courage, the martial spirit, heroic self-control, loyalty to the Daimyos, and hatred of falsehood rendered the Samurai the most wonderful military race yet known in history. The principle of honor was to the Samurai as a god, and as a modern Japanese writer says, "to have good sense enough to keep his name honorable, and to act instead of talking cleverly, was the chief ambition of a Samurai."<sup>1</sup>

When Francis came among them, he recognised with pleasure and wonder the great qualities of the Japanese, whom he later called the "delight of his soul." Seeing at first the bare temples of Shinto worship, he probably thought there were no idols. Later, as he grew acquainted with the Bonzes, whose doc-

<sup>1</sup> Okakura, *The Japanese Spirit*.

trines, imported originally from Buddhist India, were not new to Francis, he realised that a gross system of idolatry existed besides the purer and more austere principles of primitive Shintoism. The Apostle soon discovered that the people bestowed much veneration upon their ancestors and that some worshipped the sun and moon. He said that the people as a rule were more amenable to reason than their Bonzes, who were generally a degraded and vicious set of men, as well as the Bonzesses, whom he was surprised to see so well treated by the people, although they were certainly despised for their evil and idle lives. Francis conversed occasionally with the more learned Bonzes, especially their chief, a man of eighty years, respected for his knowledge—a thing held in honor by the Japanese even to the present day. This chief Bonze was named Muxet, a word meaning “truthful heart”; but in their discussions Francis perceived that he was uncertain of the immortality of the soul, often asserting it and afterwards retracting the assertion. Meanwhile it appeared to Xavier that the Bonzes were gratified by the missionaries coming such a distance to confer with them upon the religion of Jesus Christ. He thought the Japanese were ready to hear the Gospel, and that once he and his companions had learnt the language, many conversions could be made. As it was, after forty days of hard study they were able to explain to the people the Ten Commandments in Japanese. So sanguine was the Apostle that he proposed to send for more Fathers. Paul Angero’s friends were listening to his instructions; and he con-

verted his mother, wife and daughter, besides many other relations, men and women. The Saint observed in his letters that he had placed Japan under the protection of St. Michael, the Archangel, and prayed every day that he and the guardian angels of Japan would intercede for the success of the mission and the conversion of the people.

## § 2. SUCCESSFUL MISSION AT SATSUMA

On the feast of St. Michael Francis had an audience of the Prince of Satsuma, who received him well and ordered that much care should be taken of the books of Christian doctrine and laws. A few days afterwards this Prince gave his subjects leave to become Christians. During the Apostle's first winter in Japan, he had the catechism translated into Japanese and distributed to all who could read and write. He informed the Goa Fathers that two Bonzes just converted were on the point of going to India, where they should be well treated, as the Japanese thought a great deal of politeness and kindness. He ordered Gomez, under pain of grave sin, not to oppose the departure of any Father for whom Xavier might send. This stern injunction proves that if Francis did commit an error of judgment by leaving Gomez as rector at Goa, he was by no means blind to his self-will and domineering spirit, qualities which eventually ended in Gomez's expulsion from the Society.

To his benefactor, the governor of Malacca, Francis repeated his warm thanks for all his kindness and gave him an account of Japan similar to that for-

warded to the Society. The pirate owner of the junk, "El Ladrao," had died at Cangoxima, clinging to his idols. As many Japanese were attracted to Malacca by Angero's enthusiastic descriptions, Francis begged Dom Pedro to receive them hospitably, as good treatment would incline them to conversion.

As soon as he could express himself in the Japanese language, Francis began to preach. Standing on some raised place, he lifted his eyes to heaven, made the sign of the cross, and read in a loud voice from the catechism. The Bonzes now commenced to scoff at his teaching, and the people were often incredulous and indifferent, when not hostile and insulting. But, taking no notice of this, Francis patiently continued his instructions. Questions were answered through interpreters, and soon some asked to be baptised. The first was a very poor man, who was given the name Bernard and afterwards became remarkable for his sanctity.<sup>2</sup> This neophyte followed Francis everywhere and was later sent by him with another convert to Rome. His companion having died at Goa, Bernard alone reached Rome, where he saw St. Ignatius and the Pope and gave them a full account of the Eastern missions. Then going to Portugal, he entered the Society at Coimbra, where he died about 1566.

Francis worked several miracles at Cangoxima, and it was said that, owing to his prayers on behalf of the poor fishermen, the bay became remarkable for excellent fishing. Once a child suffering from hydropsy was brought to him by its mother. The saint took

<sup>2</sup> Pagès, *Lettres*, Vol. II.

it in his arms, and looking with compassion at the little creature, said several times: "May God bless thee." The child was suddenly healed. He also cured a man of leprosy on his promise that he would become a Christian.

It would appear from his correspondence that Francis preached the Gospel for a year at Satsuma and converted six hundred people. Many more would have embraced Christianity had they not been afraid of their ruler. This man, who at first had welcomed the missionaries, turned against them when he heard that the Portuguese traders preferred the port of another state to that of Cangoxima. Jealous of Francis' increasing influence, the Bonzes did not fail to make use of this circumstance, and by their threats and calumnies induced the superstitious prince to publish an edict forbidding his subjects under pain of death to become Christians. Seeing the trend of events, Francis thought it more prudent to leave Satsuma. The neophytes, who bitterly regretted his departure, were left in charge of Paul Angero.<sup>3</sup> Francis then travelled to a place named Firando, where there was a port frequented by the Portuguese. On his road thither he stopped at the castle of a great Daimyo,

<sup>3</sup> Six months later Paul Angero was so violently persecuted by the Bonzes that he quit the country. He went to China and died there. (On his last days see Brou, II, 174 sq.) However, the converts had been so well taught by St. Francis that not only did they remain fervent Christians but brought over five hundred others to the Church. When eleven years afterwards Father Almeida came to Satsuma, he found them faithfully following the Apostle's instructions.

Hexandono, whose wife, eldest son, and fifteen other persons were converted and baptised. Though he willingly admitted the excellence of the new doctrines, Hexandono himself refused to embrace them out of human respect. His steward, however, a venerable old retainer, was baptised and appointed catechist, Francis giving him a copy of the catechism, the Life of Christ, and a set of prayers. These he was told to read aloud every Sunday to the neophytes in a hall of the castle, where any heathen who chose might attend. "This was done, and Father Almeida, S.J., found over a hundred Christians in this fortress, orderly, modest, assiduous in prayer, charitable, and severe to themselves, so that the fort was like a monastery. The Daimyo, still a pagan, allowed two of his children to be baptised."<sup>4</sup> One of the converts composed a book on the truths of religion so well that Father Almeida took a copy of it for the Bungo Christians.<sup>5</sup>

Before Francis left the castle, he gave each neophyte a silk sachet in the shape of an Agnus Dei, containing a paper on which he had written the Creed and the names of Jesus and Mary. Devotion to these holy names was much practised by the Saint, and so well did he teach it in Japan that not only the Christians but also the heathen invoked Jesus and Mary in all perils. His new catechist had asked Francis to give him something to cure the sick, there being no physicians or remedies in that district, and St. Francis

<sup>4</sup> Dryden, Bk. V.

<sup>5</sup> Pagès, *Vie de S. François Xavier*.

gave him a picture of the Blessed Virgin, saying: "This is a remedy for souls. Venerate this picture, and whenever you or others wish to obtain pardon of your sins, ask our Lady to beg her divine Son to pardon you." Then handing the old man a scourge, he added: "This discipline is for the cure of the body. If any Christian or heathen gets fever and gives, or if you give, three or five gentle strokes, invoking the holy names of Jesus and Mary, the patient will be cured." <sup>6</sup> When the sign of the cross was made with this discipline over the wife of the Daimyo, she recovered from a dangerous illness. This noble and pious lady also treasured a small book of prayers written and given her by the Saint, which effected cures when laid upon the sick, including on one occasion the (unbelieving) Daimyo himself.

Francis was well received by the Lord of Firando, and in a few days converted a hundred people by reading aloud his Japanese version of Christian doctrine. Stationing Father Torres at Firando, Francis took Brother Fernandez, who alone of his company knew Japanese, and the two native catechists, Matthew and Bernard, and with them departed on his journey to Miyaco (Meaco), then the capital of Japan, now known as Kioto.

### § 3. JOURNEY TO THE CAPITAL

They embarked on a junk sailing to the isle of Nippon, and (March, 1551) halted at Yamaguchi, an important town and capital of a province, rich in

<sup>6</sup> Michel, Liv. IV, ch. ii, p. 299.



silver mines and fertile land. This city, though built of wood, was well populated. Twice a day Francis read his instructions in the streets. Many persons listened attentively to his words, and he was called into the houses of some nobles, who promised they would become Christians if they found his law better than their own. While some were edified, others scoffed at his teaching, so that the missionaries were soon followed by street urchins and rabble who threw stones at "the two Bonzes who wanted them to worship one God and to content themselves with one wife." Soon Francis was summoned to the palace, where the King asked him who he was and what had brought him to Yamaguchi. Francis replied that he and his companions were Europeans and had come to preach the law of God. At the King's request he read his instructions for more than an hour. Oxindono, though attentive, made no comment and at length dismissed the missionaries. They continued their preaching for some days, but were derided and insulted, for they struck directly at the roots of the crimes of this wealthy but wicked city. On the whole there were few conversions, so that in September Francis pursued his journey to Miyaco.

During the cold and rainy months of December and January, the travellers endured much hardship, as they went along the coast of the famous Inland Sea. They were poorly clothed and had only a little rice on which to sustain their strength. There was no money, because Francis had given the thousand crowns he had brought to Japan to poor converts. The country was

in a state of warfare, the roads infested by brigands, and a fit of fever detained Francis at a place called Say or Sacay. The guide Bernard often lost his way, thereby adding considerably to the length of the journey. But in every town and village Francis read his book, though "he was mostly laughed at, and the children ran calling out 'Dios, Dios!' that word being so often used by our Apostle, who could find no corresponding word in Japanese. Moreover, he did not wish that this sacred name should be confounded with the idols. He told the people that as they had no knowledge of the true God, they were unable to express His name — but the Portuguese who knew Him, called Him *Dios*, repeating this word so fervently that pagans felt what veneration was due to it." <sup>7</sup>

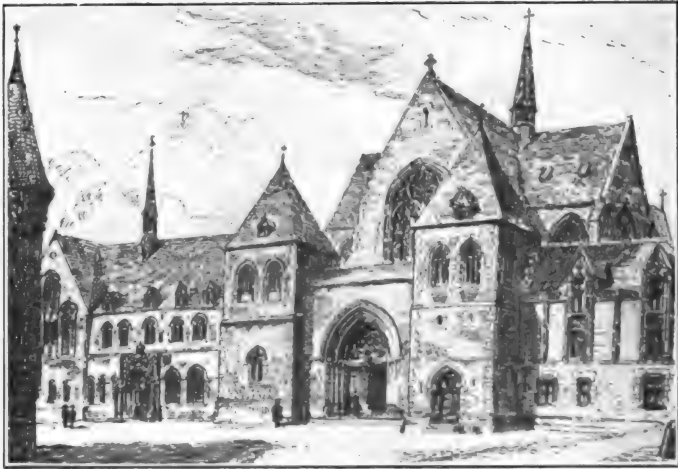
In two localities, where he attacked the vices of the people, Francis would have been stoned, had not a storm dispersed the angry mob. One day, to be safe against robbers, the missionaries joined a party of merchants on horseback. To prevent any opposition on their part, Francis offered to carry a package, and he, the noble nuncio, ran humbly on foot behind the owner, who was riding at a great pace to escape the unwelcome notice of the brigands. Twice on this long journey Francis was wounded by arrows, and whenever he stumbled or fell on the road, according to Father Lucena, he repeated verses from the Psalms appropriate to the situation.

At this period Francis did not realise that his love of

<sup>7</sup> Dryden, Bk. V.

poverty and abjection was a stumbling block and source of derision to the Japanese, who thought so much of their customs and whose etiquette differed so widely from those of Western nations. The result was that, as the missionaries pursued their painful journey barefooted and in ragged garments, they were treated as vagabonds, whose ideals and mode of life were absolutely opposed to those of the natives. Wherever they went, their teaching was ridiculed, and what St. Paul said of himself, "We are reviled and we bless, we are persecuted and we suffer it," (1 Cor. IV, 12), was truly applicable to St. Francis Xavier at this time.

On reaching Miyaco, Francis found that this once immense city had been ruined by fire and pillage during the civil wars which still continued between the Dairi and his viceroys. Standing at the palace gates in the hope that some gentleman would procure him an audience of the sovereign, Francis soon discovered that it was impossible to realise his wish. Nor were the people in a humor to listen to strangers. Seeing that his sermons were not even noticed, Francis and his companions left Miyaco at the end of eleven disappointing days. As they sailed down the river to the port of Sacay, it is said the Saint could not turn away his eyes from the city and repeated with much emotion the Psalm, "*In exitu Israel de Ægypto.*" However, the few converts baptised at Miyaco became the nucleus of a flourishing church. During the journey to Firando, says Father Michel, Francis never lost an opportunity of speaking to the natives of God. He



VIEW OF MODERN PARISH CHURCH, ISLAND OF MACAO (MIYACO)



used to buy fruit at the inns and give it to the children with his blessing; and when men told him of their illness and women of their sick children, he would write a few words from the Gospel on a slip of paper and tell them to wear it and they would be cured.

Great was the joy of Father de Torres when his beloved superior, after an absence of four months, despite the privations of a rough and tedious journey, returned to Firando in good health.

Some days of much needed repose were spent at Firando, and then Francis returned to Yamaguchi, where he had an audience of the ruler, Oxindono, whom Father Michel calls Yoxitaca and describes as the most powerful of all the Japanese viceroys, as he governed twenty provinces. To this prince Francis gave the presents originally intended for the Dairi or Mikado. Oxindono welcomed his guest very graciously and was delighted with a chiming clock, mirrors, crystal flasks, and such like trinkets sent by the Portuguese Viceroy and the Governor of Malacca. In compliance with the usual custom, Oxindono offered in return a large sum of money, which Francis refused, to the surprise of the viceroy, who, says an old historian, was more accustomed to the cupidity and avarice of his own Bonzes than to the disinterested conduct of these missionaries of Christ.

#### § 4. FAVORABLE EDICT OF VICEROY OXINDONO

Francis obtained leave to preach the Gospel, and an edict was published allowing every one who chose to become a Christian. An empty bonzery at Vareia

was allocated to the Apostle as a residence, and on the land around it Father Torres later built a church and house. To St. Ignatius, Xavier now wrote describing his own experiences as a sample of what future missionaries on the Japanese stations might expect to meet with. The natives, he said, had no proper conception of time. All day long, and even during the night, the missionaries were pestered by innumerable visitors, each more importunate than the other. The nobles did not hesitate to send at any hour for the Fathers, who as a matter of prudence were obliged to attend these calls, however inconvenient they might be. There was no time left for prayer, meditation, or other spiritual exercises. During the first days they could not even say Mass, thanks to the swarms of Japanese who scarcely gave them a moment to eat and sleep. The natives were particularly troublesome to strangers, whom they despised, and readily turned any answer given them into ridicule.<sup>8</sup> Francis possessed his soul in patience and answered every question in such a manner that it was said that each person seemed to find in his brief sentences the reply to his own particular inquiry. This prodigy was related to Father Quadros by a Japanese. Though the Apostle and his companions often made grammatical mistakes, thereby exciting the hilarity of their hearers, still their holy lives, so different from those of the Bonzes, did not fail to impress the observant and intelligent Japanese, who were compelled to admit the beauty of the Christian religion as practised by these missionaries. Not-

<sup>8</sup> *Monum. Xav.*, p. 669.

withstanding their many objections and pertinacious contradiction of every argument, the people gradually began to embrace the true faith. The most remarkable of the conversions was due to the heroic self-control shown by Brother Joam Fernandez. One day when he was preaching an insolent man spat in his face. Fernandez wiped his cheek and continued as if nothing had occurred. This appealed so forcibly to the more educated spectators that one of them, a learned man, who was a bitter opponent of the Christian religion, became a convert. His baptism led the way to others, particularly that of a youthful but almost blind genius, Lawrence, surnamed "the squint-eyed." He had studied in the most famous schools of Japan and entered the Society of Jesus as a lay-brother; for thirty years his discourses in Miyaco and the adjoining States<sup>9</sup> converted numbers of the nobility, gentry, literati, and Samurai.

At this time Francis spoke Japanese like a native, and also preached in Chinese to merchants of that nation at Yamaguchi. The number of baptisms among people of rank and education rose quickly to five hundred, including many Bonzes, so that the bonzeries were emptied; for the Bonzes who remained pagans, finding it hard to get alms from the people, returned to the world to work for their livelihood. The Saint was ever at war with the Bonzes, and so much did he discredit them that they were obliged to become traders or soldiers, which made the Christians say that in a short time there would be no more idolaters in

<sup>9</sup> Cros, II, 141, 147; Brou, II, 204 sq.



Yamaguchi. The older Bonzes did all they could to oppose Xavier, who promptly refuted their accusations, threats, etc.; but Oxindono sided with them, though neither his coolness nor the Bonzes' calumnies checked the progress of Christianity.<sup>10</sup>

Francis, while overwhelmed by work at this period, said he never felt better or stronger in his life, even though, as he told St. Ignatius, his hair had turned white. Day by day he held controversies with every class of people, from the nobles to the coolies. He preached in the streets, instructed and baptised the converts, and superintended the labors of his companions. Those neophytes whose superior intelligence and learning rendered them capable of following a religious vocation, he received into the Society of Jesus. It was, however, a great disappointment that Oxindono was too indolent and too strongly attached to his evil passions to be converted. Although he did not revoke his favorable edicts, he persecuted the Christians and confiscated their property, which nevertheless did not hinder the increase of Christianity in his territory, where there were soon three thousand Christians ready to endure all things for Christ. Faithful to Xavier's teaching, they kept up their religious practices for some years until the arrival of Jesuit missionaries, who were edified by their perseverance and constancy.

### § 5. VISIT TO THE KING OF BUNGO

Hearing that St. Ignatius had named him provincial

<sup>10</sup> Dryden, Bk. V.

of the missions in India, Francis found it necessary to return to that country at least for a short time. Before leaving Japan, he decided to pay a visit to Bungo, where he had been invited by the youthful King Cipian. With his catechists Lawrence and Bernard, and accompanied by two nobles whose property had been seized on account of their conversion, the Apostle travelled on foot to Bungo. A Portuguese ship was then in the harbor of Figen, near the King's residence. The captain and crew coming ashore to greet the Apostle, met him humbly, carrying his small baggage as he walked behind the Japanese nobles who were on horse back, according to the custom of their caste. The ship's cannon was fired as a mark of respect to the Saint. The discharge being heard at the court at Fucheo, the King sent to know if the Portuguese had been attacked by pirates, who were then ravaging the coasts. The shipmaster, Edward da Gama, explained the reason of the salvoes and introduced Xavier to the King's messenger, who remarked that the Yamaguchi Bonzes said that he was a wretch, had an evil spirit, etc. Gama refuted these fabrications and said that in spite of his mean garments Xavier was a noble man, poor through virtue, and despising worldly pomps. "This statement convinced the messenger, who told his King that the Portuguese were more happy in having Xavier than if their vessel were laden with gold. The King of Bungo, who did not believe the lies told of Xavier, invited him to his court, sending to him a prince of the royal blood, attended by thirty lords and his governor. Amazed at

the respect paid to the poor-looking European Bonze, the Japanese considered his poverty disgraceful, but the King's governor, who was a wise old man, said to his pupils that though they had such a horror of poverty, Xavier by his want might be pleasing to God and richer than the greatest monarch. Meanwhile Xavier yielded to the advice of the Portuguese to go in splendor to court to confute the calumnies of the Bonzes. He replaced his worn-out soutane by a good cassock, donned a surplice and a stole of green velvet with a gold clasp. Thirty Portuguese followed him as his suite, richly dressed, with their servants and slaves and bands of music. At the landing they found courtiers waiting with a litter, which Xavier refused, as he walked in state, Edward da Gama going bare-headed as majordomo. One of the retinue carried a book in a white satin bag; another bore fine black slippers worn only by great dignitaries; another a tablet of our Lady wrapped in a violet scarf, and the fifth held open a magnificent parasol. The procession made a great impression upon the spectators. The Lords, seeing this state and ceremony, called the Bonzes liars and said that Xavier was a man descended from above to confound their pride and envy. The procession was met by a child, who welcomed the Saint and spoke in a manner above his age, so that Francis thought he must be inspired by the Holy Spirit.<sup>11</sup>

Nothing could exceed the kind reception of Francis by the King, who made him sit beside himself on his throne and listened with pleasure and interest to all the

<sup>11</sup> Dryden, Bk. V.

Apostle told him about Christianity. The King having praised Xavier, and indirectly blamed the doctrines of the Bonzes, one of these, a man renowned for learning, arrogantly attacked Francis. However, the King silenced him, saying, in allusion to the rage of the Bonze, that "his choler was a convincing proof of this Bonze's holiness, and that a man of his [the accuser's] character had more commerce with hell than with heaven." Francis and the monarch pursued their conversation until the dinner hour. On the invitation of Cipian, the Saint shared the royal meal, the Portuguese retinue and the courtiers meanwhile kneeling around, as well as the Bonzes, who tried to hide their fury and discomfiture. The King gave Francis leave to preach in his dominions and issued edicts for the reformation of bad customs.<sup>12</sup> Xavier's knowledge of the secular sciences gave much satisfaction to the Japanese, who did not know that the earth was spherical, nor scarcely anything else of physical science. They listened eagerly to his talk, considering the missionaries to be wise men of the first order, as Francis wrote to Ignatius. This respect for learning induced the people to pay more attention to instructions on religion both at Yamaguchi and in Bungo.<sup>13</sup>

While the Apostle was in Bungo news came that Oxindono, after killing his wife and son and setting his palace on fire, had committed suicide rather than

<sup>12</sup> This romantic account we owe to Mendez Pinto (*Peregrinações*, Lisbon, 1614, ch. ccxi. Fr. Brou (II, 234 sq.) thinks "il n'est pas improbable qu'un peu de réalité historique se cache sous les embellissements de l'incorrigible romancier."

<sup>13</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, p. 685.

survive the dishonor of being overcome by a revolution. Father Torres and Fernandez had been in much danger, indeed they would have been murdered, says Dryden, had they not found refuge in the palace of the wife of the revolting Daimyo, who concealed them. When the inhabitants of Yamaguchi finally elected the brother of the king of Bungo as their ruler, Francis obtained a promise that his missionaries should be under the protection of the new monarch. Although King Cipian showed Francis much friendship, he did not become a Christian until the Saint had been dead thirty years; then, in remembrance of him, he took the name of Francis at his baptism.

The Portuguese were afraid that Francis would fall ill from overwork, but he assured them that his food and sleep, nay his very life, consisted in delivering from the devil precious souls, for the sake of whom God had called him from the utmost limits of the earth.

The conversion of a learned Bonze brought five hundred Japanese into the Church. Even Cipian, though without embracing Christianity, reformed his immoral life, and, discarding the Bonzes' belief that crime and poverty were the same thing, became as charitable as he formerly had been hard-hearted. He suppressed the very common crime of infanticide, abolished many pagan rites, and turned the Bonzes out of his palaces. The king parted sadly from Francis, who kissed the hand of the Japanese ruler as he reminded him of the nothingness of this world and the necessity of saving his soul by accepting Christ. He also promised

to pray for his royal friend. Although the Bonzes were delighted to see the Saint leaving, they tried to raise an uproar at Fucheo (capital of Bungo) to revenge themselves. They tried to burn the Portuguese ship and did their best to blacken Xavier's reputation with the people, who for this only hated the Bonzes more. They then sought to prejudice the King by forcing a disputation between Francis and the Bonze who had been so insolent on Xavier's coming to Bungo. This man now accused him of being a merchant who had defrauded the Bonze in some trading transaction fifteen hundred years ago, which crazy falsehood Xavier easily confuted, as well as the Bonze's assertion about the transmigration of souls.

#### § 6. CONFERENCE WITH JAPANESE BONZES

Fearing for the safety of their ship, the Portuguese embarked, imploring Francis to come with them. But he refused to run away like a fugitive, or to forsake his neophytes. The Portuguese lingered at Figen a little longer; then they sent their captain Gama, who found Francis with eight Christians in expectation of a cruel death. The Apostle would not listen to Gama's expostulations, being rather offended at the idea of escaping martyrdom or deserting his flock. The captain resolved to remain with him, sending word to the merchants that he surrendered his ship. But no one would agree to this, and the crew returned to the port which they had left, fearing the onslaught of the mob roused by the Bonzes. Leaving the vessel well

guarded, the Portuguese traders and the captain returned to Fucheo, where their arrival amazed the natives and encouraged the converts.

The Bonzes now demanded another conference, which the King allowed on condition of having no noise, abuse, or sharp words. Three thousand Bonzes presented themselves on the appointed day, but the King permitted only four of them to be present, on the ground that it was not fair for so many to appear against a single champion. Xavier then arrived in state, which still further enraged his opponents. A long conference ensued, the disputing Bonzes' pride being humbled by the strong and pertinent reasons given by Francis for all he asserted. Finally the Bonzes fell foul of each other over some point of doctrine, and would have come to blows, had not Cipian frightened them by his interposition. The audience agreed that nothing could better confirm Xavier's doctrine than to see his adversaries at loggerheads among themselves. The next day there was a fresh disputation, to which the King himself brought Xavier from his lodgings. When the Bonzes began a fruitless repetition of their old arguments, the King said that Francis was ready to sail and it was not reasonable to waste his time, but if they had any new questions to ask, they should begin or else betake themselves off. They commenced, and Xavier was amazed at hearing them argue like schoolmen, and he said to Gama in Portuguese: "See how the devil has sharpened the wits of his advocates." The Saint however gave such wise answers and made his opponents contradict themselves

so, that at last they gnashed their teeth and stamped their feet like madmen. The King was indignant and told them that Xavier spoke good sense, while they did not know what they were saying. The Bonzes ended by cursing him and departed.<sup>14</sup>

### § 7. DEPARTURE FROM JAPAN

Once more taking farewell of the King, Francis left Japan, November 20th, 1551, after two years and a half spent in the foundation of the mission. King Cipian at the same time sent an envoy to the Viceroy at Goa, with power to make a treaty of alliance with the Portuguese and to ask for preachers of the Gospel.

As was so often the case when Francis went to sea, a storm nearly wrecked the ship. When it was on the point of foundering, he cried out: "O Jesus Christ, love of my soul! Save us, by the memory of the five wounds thou didst receive on the cross for us." Instantly the vessel righted itself and the danger passed away. But another boat towed by the ship broke adrift with fifteen men, including two Mohammedans who had refused baptism. Francis, lamenting the probable loss of these poor souls, spent much time praying for them in his cabin. This was reported by a Chinese sailor, who was put on guard at the door, to prevent the Saint being disturbed. At length Francis told the captain not to feel alarmed, "as in three days the daughter will rejoin her mother." Not long afterwards a boy on board exclaimed that he saw the missing boat coming across the still turbulent waves.

<sup>14</sup> Dryden, Bk. V.



When the tow-rope was again fastened, the fifteen men declared that they had seen Father Francis steering their boat and heard him speak encouraging words. The two Mohammedans asked to be baptised by him who had just saved their lives. Whether he had been represented by an angel, or whether it was an instance of that mysterious bilocation which has occurred in the lives of several Saints, need not be discussed in these pages; but there is no doubt of this extraordinary miracle, related in all the biographies of our Apostle.<sup>15</sup>

### § 8. PLAN TO REACH CHINA

At the Chinese port of San Chan, much frequented by Portuguese shippers, Francis removed to a vessel called the *Santa Cruz*, belonging to his friend Diego de Pereira. When taking leave of the pilot who brought him from Bungo, Francisco d'Aguiar, Francis told him that he should never end his days at sea. This so impressed the man that he never felt any fear even on the most dangerous voyages, made in rotten or dilapidated ships. On the last day of the year 1551, the *Santa Cruz* sailed from the harbor of San Chan. During his voyage Francis had long conversations with Pereira, to whom he often spoke of his project of

<sup>15</sup> As bilocation certainly happens in the Blessed Sacrament, there is no reason why an all-powerful God should not allow a similar power to a Saint to be in two places at the same time, by some mysterious method incomprehensible to our finite intelligence—if He thought it necessary for His greater glory and the salvation of souls. The more holy a saint becomes, the greater the interior graces he receives, the greater also his resemblance to Christ in a spiritual sense. On bilocation see Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. II, St. Louis, 1916, pp. 181 sqq.

preaching the Gospel in China. He said he had been much attracted by the Chinese merchants whom he met in Japan. He thought them quite as intelligent as the Japanese, and as eager to acquire knowledge, if indeed they were not superior in intellect. From his inquiries he found that China was a rich land, full of religious sects, including, he suspected, Jews and Mohammedans, though he did not believe there were any Christians there. It was likely to prove a fruitful mission, and if the Chinese embraced the true faith, the Japanese would soon forsake their paganism, which they had imported from China. Already Francis had procured a translation of his work on Christianity into the Chinese language. Portuguese merchants, however, had told him how, in consequence of the wicked conduct of Simon d'Andrada and other adventurers, the Chinese ports were closed to Europeans by the natives, who cruelly murdered many Portuguese in revenge for their hectoring behavior and shameful exactions.

Pereira was of opinion that the only way Francis could enter China was by means of an embassy to Peking. He generously offered a thousand pieces of gold to meet the expense. Francis highly approved of this idea, hoping that it would be easy to persuade the Viceroy to send Pereira as his envoy. When Pereira lamented the siege and other misfortunes predicted by Xavier, then befalling Malacca, Francis observed that there was no longer cause for alarm, as a panic had dispersed the besiegers. He also made the well known prediction about the *Santa Cruz* vessel. A storm was raging when, after long prayers, Francis told Pereira

to thank God for His mercies, as the *Santa Cruz* would come safely out of all peril and fall to pieces many years later in the dock where she had been built. This prediction was fulfilled to the letter at the end of thirty years. Francis said that a ship that left San Chan with them had been wrecked, and the sea calming down, spars of the ill-fated vessel and dead bodies were seen floating on the water, together with two sailors clinging to a plank, who were still alive when they were rescued by the crew of the *Santa Cruz*.

On his arrival at Malacca (Dec., 1551) crowds came to greet the Apostle, but he was saddened at the sight of the ruin produced by the recent siege. He reminded the people of his prediction of impending punishment and again implored them to do penance. His friend, Governor Pedro de Sylva, had just resigned his post to his brother, Dom Alvarez da Gama. Francis spoke to them both about the mission to China, of which they approved, although at a later date Dom Alvarez, unhappily for himself, changed his mind and by his avarice and persistent opposition became the means of checking the Apostle's labors in the Middle Kingdom.

Diego de Pereira, not being able to go to Goa, gave the Saint three thousand crowns towards the contemplated mission, after which Francis sailed in Antonio Pereira's ship to India, reaching Cochin on January 24th, 1552.

## CHAPTER IX

### PREPARATIONS FOR THE CHINESE MISSION

#### § 1. FRANCIS RETURNS TO GOA

Francis, on landing in India, was warmly received by the Viceroy, who happened to be at Cochin. Here Francis saw for himself that Father Gomez, presuming on his influence with the Viceroy, had given much scandal and annoyance. He had seized for the new college of the Society, then being erected, a church belonging to a certain Confraternity, and had made vexatious regulations. Francis at once set himself to repair the damage, by going in person to apologize to the Confraternity and restore to them the keys of their chapel. This humble proceeding on the part of the "Great Father" so edified the members that they offered to resign their rights in favor of the Society of Jesus. In the same manner Francis appeased the Christians, who were on the point of going to law with the arbitrary Father Gomez.<sup>1</sup> Very soon he had set everything to rights at Cochin, wrote several letters to Europe detailing his Japanese experiences, and then hastened on toward Goa.

In view of the recent demand for German Jesuits as professors to lecture in the modern university at Tokyo, it is curious to read in Francis' epistles to St.

<sup>1</sup> Michel, *Vie*, p. 350; Brou, II, 265 sqq.

Ignatius and Rodriguez the strong opinion he had that the best missionaries to send to Japan would be German and Flemish Fathers, who knew Portuguese and Spanish; because men of these nationalities were better suited by temperament and education to support the intensely cold seasons of northern Japan where the universities were situated. He remarked that they must be well trained in discussion and possess sufficient argumentative skill to confound the Bonzes, whose authority predominated in these seats of learning.

Francis intended to send men from Cochin to Yamaguchi, to study the language, doctrines, and institutions of Japan. Later, with the missionaries already there, they could serve as interpreters to the European Fathers of the Society, until the newcomers were able to dispute directly with the Bonzes at the University of Bandu, where people went from all parts of the Empire. Francis knew this to be a large and well-populated town, whose inhabitants were as noted for their noble birth and valor as for their pacific tastes. Great care, he said, should be taken in the selection of men for this mission; they should be eminent in science as well as virtue, for they would have to cope with the sages of a nation that was intensely proud of its history and itself, and under the domination of Bonzes treated as the highest personages in the land. Once Christianity was established in Japan, Francis thought it was sure to get on well there; but it would require much labor to preach the faith.

Francis also wrote that he intended to visit China that year, provided nothing occurred to keep him in

India. To Father Camerino at Goa he sent a few lines directing him to dismiss two priests whom he (Xavier) was sending him, and to place them under the jurisdiction of the Bishop. They were to be forbidden to enter the college of Santa Fè even as visitors. It grieved him to be obliged to expel these missionaries from the Society, and he feared they were not the only ones who might have to be thus severely treated. It pained him to find on his return to India, disorder, quarrels, and litigation, which had become a positive scandal and was quite contrary to the advice he had given.

Other Fathers in their letters told St. Ignatius how Francis' unexpected arrival at Goa in February delighted everybody. His great labors, however, had ruined his health, so that he could only digest a few eggs powdered with sugar, which he thought a useless expense on his behalf. Notwithstanding his serious infirmities, the Apostle preached five or six times daily, heard confessions, examined the affairs of the Society, and looked after the spiritual and physical needs of the Goanese. These indeed he was gratified to find much improved in their conduct and religious practices. Nothing could exceed his affability and kindness to others, only to himself was he severe. Yet his virtue was greater than ever. All the time at his disposal was spent in prayer and contemplation. He avoided intimacy with the rich and powerful. When obliged to seek them on behalf of some good work, he spoke of nothing else but the business in hand. Thus he was more at liberty to protest against abuses and

disorders, no matter by whom they were committed. Father Luis Frois (or Froès) wrote an account of the Saint's last visit to Goa, which is almost as good as a photograph of Xavier's community life. "So long as he remained with us there was great fervor in the house, each of the brethren praying that he might be chosen to follow Father Xavier, since of all the lands he had evangelised none had offered so much promise of salvation, and even martyrdom, as the Chinese mission was likely to do. Father Francis was writing to Portugal and drawing up instructions for the Fathers stationed at the forts, just as though they were the farewell of a person they would never see again. He encouraged us all, and such was the gentle and penetrating effect of his words that no one could doubt they came from a heart full of the Holy Ghost. In the refectory he bade the brethren each in turn to give an account of his life, his family, however humble the position he occupied in the world, besides a description of his inclinations and temptations in the Society (of course without including mention of any mortal sin). This exercise sometimes replaced the spiritual reading at meals, and as soon as a brother had finished speaking, Father Francis summed up his discourse in such a way as to inspire self-contempt and the hope of eternal salvation. Then he pointed out the remedies needed by each brother, thus showing his experience of souls and their necessities. He also asked how the brethren made their examen of conscience, teaching them the best method of rendering this practice useful as a preparation for the Sacrament of Penance.

A Father and a Brother having been chosen to go to China, they set to work learning the language from a young Chinese who had been brought up at the college and whom Francis intended to take with him as catechist.

Father Frois added that Francis collected valuable presents for the Emperor of China, such as silks, velvets, canopies, carpets, pictures, and things brought by Father Barzeus from Persia, besides the requisites for a pontifical chapel.

## § 2. GOVERNMENT OF THE INDIAN PROVINCE

The case of Father Gomez had been a sore trial to Francis Xavier, and his worry was augmented at Goa when he discovered that Gomez, in defiance of his superior, Father Camerino, had attempted to alter the rules and customs of the Society, substituting others of his own invention, and had treated the native students in the seminary so harshly that they fled, whereupon he replaced them by an ignorant set of Portuguese. So completely had Gomez gained the ear of the Viceroy that the Bishop was afraid to interfere when Gomez's capricious and violent temper roused general indignation among the people and exasperated the Fathers under him, whom he treated very inconsiderately. Francis at once re-established matters on their former footing, turning out the Portuguese and again collecting native students for the seminary. Nor did he hesitate to reprimand Gomez very severely, but seeing that his disobedient subject neither realised nor regretted the disedification and harm he had caused, the Saint,



not wishing to aggravate the scandal, sent him to preach at Diu. He resolutely refused to listen to any entreaty made by friends of Gomez for his recall to Goa. Dryden says the Fathers at Diu were ordered to dismiss Gomez from the Society and do their best to persuade him to go back to Portugal. But Father Michel, with better information, writes that Francis, before going to China, left an order with the new rector to expel Gomez only in case he should presume to leave Diu. When Francis had gone to China, Gomez again disobeyed by leaving Diu, whereupon Father Barzeus dismissed him from the Society. At the death of Francis, Gomez, recognising his errors, wrote to beg St. Ignatius' pardon. The holy Founder let him know that his humble apology was accepted but that he must come to Rome, where it would be settled what would be done in his case. Gomez embarked in the early part of 1555, but he and the other passengers perished in a violent storm at sea.<sup>2</sup>

Father Barzeus, just recalled by Xavier from Ormuz, was appointed rector of the college in place of the dismissed Gomez, and named vice-provincial of the Indian province — comprising China, Japan, Malacca and the Moluccas. Francis, though himself provincial, humbly knelt and kissed his hand, expressing his wish to place himself under Barzeus' obedience, to the confusion of this worthy missionary who afterwards received from the Apostle long and detailed instructions in writing for his guidance. In these directions Barzeus was ordered to turn out of the Society any dis-

<sup>2</sup> Michel, *Vie*, pp. 375-6; Brou, II, 309 sqq.

obedient or proud member, even were he remarkable for his learning or talents. Barzeus was not to leave Goa for three years, unless a new provincial were sent from Europe, when he was to go wherever he was ordered. Francis wrote other letters to the Fathers on the Goa station and elsewhere, giving them advice on their duties and the practice of humility. Should Barzeus die, the Fathers were instructed to elect Father Morales, and failing him, Father Nuñez, so as to avoid a general election, which would disturb and interrupt the missionaries at work on the distant missions.

With the strong aptitude for organisation which was a prominent characteristic of St. Francis Xavier, he did not depart from India until he had settled all the affairs of the Society of Jesus in the East. Fathers were sent to different places, while one of the yet unordained brethren accompanied the Japanese converts we have already mentioned, to Rome, bearing a full report to St. Ignatius, as well as letters to John III and Master Rodriguez in Portugal. In his epistles to Ignatius and Rodriguez, Francis again wrote that German and Flemish Fathers were decidedly the best men to be sent to Japan, and that it was advisable that they should have some knowledge of astronomy, the Japanese being very curious concerning natural phenomena. He again implored Ignatius to send news of the Society by one of the Fathers, for it would be such a comfort "in the midst of the immense labors we endure by land and sea, in Japan and China. May God let us meet again in the joy of heaven, and if it be to His

glory, in this life also. Should this meeting be ordered, the virtue of obedience will level all obstacles. Everybody tells me that it is easy to go overland from the Chinese Empire to Jerusalem, and if I find it so, I will let you know the number of miles and how many months the journey will take."

These lines show us how deep was Xavier's affection for St. Ignatius. Clearly, it was not the least of his trials on his distant mission, to be sometimes months or years without letters from his holy Founder. If even to ordinary people it is a painful experience when they have worked hard in their calling, to find little or no recognition of their labors from their friends, how much must our Saint's loving heart have felt this prolonged silence? — though in his case the apparent neglect proceeded from no lack of consideration or appreciation, but from scanty means of communication. The friendship between these two great saints was never weakened by absence. On the contrary, it increased as the years passed by. We know that St. Ignatius always intended to recall St. Francis to take his own place as General of the Society; but this project was frustrated by the latter's early death.

Francis desired Rodriguez to tell the Portuguese King to warn Emperor Charles V that if any Spanish ship tried to land men in Japan, they would surely be massacred, were it only for the sake of their weapons, which were so attractive to the natives. Moreover, vessels coming from New Spain were certain to be wrecked on the numerous reefs studding the Japanese Sea. The Saint told Rodriguez to be very attentive to

the two Japanese converts, showing them all the churches, universities, etc. He should have preferred sending a converted Bonze, so as to give Europeans some idea of the great intelligence of this nation; but most of them were nobles and wealthy and did not wish to leave their own land even for a time; although some of the neophytes expressed a desire to visit the Holy Land.

To John III, Xavier announced his departure to Malacca, where with three of the Society he meant to join Pereira. He was then on the point of going to China to make an alliance on behalf of the Viceroy with the Emperor of that country, and to obtain the release of Portuguese subjects, who by their own fault had fallen into the hands of the Chinese and were then in prison. Above all, as Francis intended to wage war on the devil and his followers in that Empire, he urged the King to send at once as many missionaries as he could obtain to China and Japan, where good and learned men were needed. The Bishop of Goa and the Viceroy approved of his plans, and the latter named Pereira as his envoy, besides granting the Saint's other requests. On the eve of sailing from Goa, Francis assembled his brethren in the choir of the college church, where he made a forcible and touching exhortation; after which, with tears in his eyes, he embraced them, admonishing them to be faithful to their vocation and especially to practise that humility and obedience which is so essential to members of the Society of Jesus. On the afternoon of Maunday Thursday, April 15th, as soon as the Blessed

Sacrament had been placed in its temporary sepulchre, Francis left the chapel to go on board. His companions included the Japanese envoy returning to Bungo, two Brothers of the Society, Father Gago, Brother Alvaro Ferreira, and the Chinese catechist Antonio, besides some Jesuit missionaries destined for Japan. While in the Malayan Strait, a fierce gale was checked by Francis' prayers, though two other ships were wrecked. His companions noticing that the Saint seemed very sad, asked what ailed him, whereupon he replied that a severe epidemic was raging at Malacca. During the rest of the voyage he kept praying for this unhappy city. No sooner had he disembarked at Malacca, than he devoted himself to the care of the sick, among whom he effected many cures of soul and body. Despite the virulence of the pestilence, Francis and his helpers remained unaffected, though they were in the midst of the stricken people. The hospital being much overcrowded, Francis ordered huts to be erected on the sea shore, whither he often carried the sick persons he found in the streets. Thus Francis showed ideas of hygiene which were far in advance of his day. It is said that a youth having carelessly put a poisoned arrow between his lips died of this accident. Just as he was about to be buried Francis, touched by the mother's grief, took the dead boy's hand, saying, "In the name of Jesus Christ rise, Francis." The lad sat up, alive and well, and vowed to devote the life restored to him to the service of God. He was received into the Society and became one of its most fervent members. But for some un-

known reason, says Father Bartoli, he left the Jesuits to join the Franciscan order.

### § 3. DISGRACEFUL OPPOSITION OF ALVARO

The epidemic having disappeared, Francis Xavier wished to continue his journey to China and applied for a vessel to the governor, Dom Alvaro de Ataíde y Gama, whom he had just nursed through a serious illness. Far from displaying gratitude, Dom Alvaro, probably recollecting how, on first coming out to the East, Xavier had supported the Viceroy's authority against him at Mozambique, determined to oppose the embassy by every means in his power. The Governor, moreover, nourished a grudge against Pereira, envious that a mere merchant should enjoy the honor and advantages bestowed on him as envoy of the Portuguese King. Therefore he disregarded the express orders of the Viceroy and the humble entreaties of Francis. In spite of his greed, he refused a valuable gift offered him by Pereira, who, advised by Francis, carefully avoided assuming any state or pomp when he reached Malacca from Sunda. On the pretext of guarding against a Javanese invasion, the Governor seized the rudder of Pereira's vessel, the *Santa Cruz*. When the Javanese attack turned out to be an invention, Alvaro took no further pains to hide his anger and vindictiveness. Deeply grieved at the sight of such perversity, Francis implored Alvaro to cease his opposition, and sent him letters from the Portuguese King and the Viceroy, to prove how the Governor was disobeying their command. Besides emitting a tor-

rent of abuse and haughtily asserting his authority, Alvaro grew so insolent to the Apostle that "it was said in Malacca that such persecution might well pass as Father Francis' martyrdom."

Although he bore this ill-treatment with the utmost patience, and often wept over this unlooked-for and bitter disappointment, Francis, finding that Alvaro was deaf to every remonstrance, for the first time made use of his powers as papal nuncio, hitherto kept a secret between him and the Bishop of Goa. He sent Soares, the vicar-general of Malacca, to the Governor with the briefs of Pope Paul III and a letter in which the obstinate official was warned that by further opposition he would incur solemn excommunication at the hands of the Pope. The Governor retorted that Francis was an ambitious hypocrite and refused to heed the vicar's entreaties. In compliance with Francis' orders, Soares now excommunicated Alvaro and all who abetted him in his evil doings. The enraged Governor then seized the *Santa Cruz*, to trade in it on his own account. Pereira was now a ruined man and obliged to conceal himself from his enemy's vengeance. Great was Francis' sorrow at the misfortune befalling his good friend, and at the still worse state of Alvaro's soul, besides the harm done to religion. He said Mass and prayed fervently for the conversion of the Governor, who, it is said, on intercepting the Apostle's correspondence, was amazed not to find one word of complaint or anger against him. But Francis foretold that Alvaro should lose wealth,

honor, and life at the same time, and added: "I pray that he may not also lose his soul."<sup>3</sup>

A mob in the pay of the enraged Governor pursued the Apostle so outrageously that Francis, to avoid further scandal, retreated on board the *Santa Cruz*, which was now lying in the harbor. He wrote to Pereira an almost heartbroken letter, saying that the failure of their plans must be attributed to his, Xavier's, sins, which must indeed be great, since they were the cause of his friend's ruin. However, he hoped God would reward Pereira for all his suffering. Francis added that he meant to write an account of this sad affair to the King of Portugal, so that Pereira might be compensated for his losses.<sup>4</sup> It is said that he predicted that neither Pereira nor any of his descendants should ever suffer want.

<sup>3</sup> Two years later Alvaro de Ataíde was sent in chains to Lisbon by the Viceroy, his property was confiscated, and he was degraded from his rank in the nobility. Moreover he fell a victim to leprosy, so that no one could bear to go near him. At the point of death he repented of his wickedness and died like a Christian. The change in the disposition of this embittered man was attributed to the prayers of St. Francis Xavier on behalf of the most virulent and unjust of his enemies.

<sup>4</sup> In his letter Francis wrote: "My sins have been so great that they were quite sufficient to be the cause of my ruin and yours also. You have reason to complain of me, for I have ruined you and those who were going with us. For is it not ruinous that at my entreaty you should have spent forty thousand *pardoes* on presents for the king of China, not including the expenses incurred for the ship and cargo? However, I beg you to remember that I always intended to be of use to you in serving God. Were this not the case, I should die of grief." Michel, *Vie*, p. 400.



Francis said afterwards that since coming to the East he had never suffered more cruelly than he did this time at Malacca. Though in the course of his missions he had been often enough reviled, insulted, treated with insolence, and even put to the risk of losing his life, still all this had proceeded from the infidels, whom he came to save from crime and paganism. He had always met with the esteem and the willing assistance of every viceroy; the King of Portugal was his sincere friend and benefactor; the Bishop of Goa and the clergy all loved him dearly. Even the corrupt Portuguese settlers were amenable to his exhortations. Xavier's indisputable charm of manner had never before failed to help him in his work. Now that the close of his missionary career was drawing near, he was allowed to have his share of the chalice of his beloved Lord, described by the Prophet King: "They have compassed me about with words of hatred, and have fought against me without cause, and they repaid me evil for good: and hatred for my love."<sup>5</sup> It was a bitter experience for a man of so sweet and kindly a disposition to find himself unexpectedly scorned and injured by a brother of that excellent Dom Pedro who had been so eager to forward the Japanese mission. But in the midst of his sorrow and concern at being the unwitting means of ruin to his friends, Francis was able to say: "I gave myself to prayer;" in prayer he found support and comfort.

In a letter to Father Barzeus he ordered him to repay three hundred gold crowns to Dom Pedro de

<sup>5</sup> Ps. cviii, 3, 6.

Silva, when he should reach Goa. He also wistfully contrasted Dom Pedro's extreme goodness to him on the occasion of the Japanese mission, with the widely different conduct of his brother Dom Alvaro over the one to China. The embassy being frustrated, Francis was devising other means of going to China. As the weather was favorable, he had already sent the three Goa Fathers to join Father Torres at Yamaguchi in Japan. He was keeping an Italian lay brother and the Chinese catechist to be his companions in the dangerous attempt to penetrate into China.

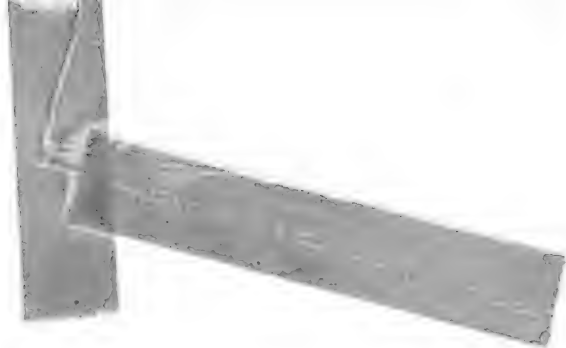
As the *Santa Cruz* was going to Sancian by order of the governor, Francis took passage on board. Pereira having chosen Gaspar Mendez de Vasconcellos as one of his agents to accompany the Apostle, Francis remarked that he had better choose another, as Mendez would die shortly at Malacca. Pereira objected that the man seemed to be in perfect health. But Francis replied that as far as his services were concerned, he might already be accounted dead. Pereira then chose another agent named Escandel. Three or four days after the sailing of the *Santa Cruz*, Mendez died as the Saint had foretold.<sup>6</sup>

In order to avoid his enemies, Francis remained praying in his favorite church of Our Lady of the Mount until nightfall, when, accompanied by some friends, he went down to the harbor. To the Vicar General's inquiry whether he would take leave of the Governor, Francis answered he would never see him again, except at God's judgment seat, where he would

<sup>6</sup> Michel, *Vie*, p. 402; Brou, II, 332.

have to render an account of his conduct. Entering a church on the road to the port, Francis prayed for his enemy's conversion. He then prostrated himself, praying in silence, and rising vehemently, took off his shoes and beat them against each other and on a stone, saying he would not bear away the dust of such an accursed place, and foretold the misfortunes coming on the Governor, which amazed the people who heard him.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Dryden.





DEATH OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER  
*(Photo by Keogh Brothers, Dublin)*

## CHAPTER X

### LAST VOYAGE AND DEATH

#### § 1. VOYAGE TO THE CHINESE COAST

Instead of the stormy weather which had hitherto dogged Francis' sea journeys, the *Santa Cruz* was delayed fifteen days in a dead calm. As the ship was overcrowded, the scarcity of drinking water soon caused such distress that the Saint told everybody to pray and ordered sea water to be put into the empty casks, over which he made the sign of the cross, when the water was found to be sweet and excellent. This miracle effected the conversion of a number of Mohammedans in the ship's company.<sup>1</sup> Some of this water was carefully preserved and used later in the cure of people in Hindustan. The next thing to happen was the fall overboard of a child. The afflicted father, a Moslem, mourned his loss three days in a corner of the vessel. Francis, meeting him, kindly asked what was wrong, and being told of the accident, remained silent a few minutes. Then he said to the man: "Will you promise to believe in Jesus Christ if God restores your child?" The Moslem willingly gave the promise, and three days later, at sunrise, the missing boy was found seated at the side of the deck. He could not recollect what had happened since his fall

<sup>1</sup> *Process.* 1616, n. 1; Cros, p. 408.

into the sea, nor how he had come back on board. The delighted father was baptised with his family, the child being named Francis.<sup>2</sup>

At an island off the Chinese coast, the inhabitants, hearing of these miracles, came on board to see the Apostle and were baptised by him. While the *Santa Cruz* was lying at anchor, the Saint disembarked, and was walking along the shore, saying his office, when he noticed some men carrying a sick man into a boat to go off to the vessel. He told them that the invalid would surely die if taken on board. Whether the man or his friends did not believe him is 'uncertain, but they did not comply with his advice. Francis observed that they might do as they chose, but that they would be obliged to bring this man ashore dead, which actually occurred. The Saint afterwards in his surplice helped to bury the subject of this prediction.

It was probably here that Francis wrote several letters dated from the Strait of Singapore. He informed Father Barzeus he could have no idea of all the trouble there was about the proposed Chinese mission. The catechist Antonio and the lay brother were both ill and as much tried as himself. If it should prove impossible to go to China, he would return to Goa, provided he were still alive, the following December or January. To Pereira he wrote that the people on the *Santa Cruz* were taking good care of him and his companions, and he hoped God would reward them for their charity. An instance of Francis's noble and generous nature is seen at the end of an epistle to Pereira,

<sup>2</sup> *Process.* 1616, n. 21.

where he says that the Vicar General of Malacca wished him to write in his favor to the Portuguese King. He had done so, although the Vicar, to please Dom Alvaro, had not exerted himself in the matter of the Chinese mission. "But how mistaken it is to lose sight of God, from whom all proceeds, thinking to obtain what one desires from men. I always try to do good to those who are not very friendly to me, because I know God will certainly punish them. You will see how God will chastise all who opposed me while engaged in His service. It is true, I feel much compassion for them, fearing their punishment will be greater than they expect."

On the way to Sancian Francis warned the captain of the *Santa Cruz* that the pilot was overshooting Canton; a mistake which necessitated the lowering of a boat to find out the whereabouts of the ship. Three days having passed without a sign of this boat, its loss was feared, but Francis assured the captain that, far from being swamped, she was bringing back provisions from Sancian, together with a vessel to pilot the *Santa Cruz* into the harbor, and this proved to the case.<sup>3</sup>

## § 2. ARRIVAL AT THE ISLAND OF SANCIAN

Sancian or San-Choan, according to Father Michel's rendering, is a group of three isles so near each other as to appear to be one.<sup>4</sup> The harbor formed at that period a half circle and was protected from typhoons

<sup>3</sup> Cros, II, 343.

<sup>4</sup> Brou, II, 339.



by an isle serving as a breakwater and mole, while it was also sheltered by the surrounding hills and mountains. It was a barren region, having few inhabitants; the Portuguese being merely allowed to have shanties there for trading purposes with the Canton merchants — so jealously did the mandarins guard the mainland from foreign intrusion.

Although the greater number of the ships in the harbor were on the eve of departure, the Portuguese were at first glad to see Francis Xavier, for whom they erected two shanties on the side of a hill facing the harbor to serve as a chapel and residence. Here he said Mass, taught children and slaves the catechism, settled disputes and attended to his other duties. He wrote an order to Father Perez to leave Malacca at once with the novice Joam Bravo, while the two houses and the chapel belonging to the Society were to be left in charge of Vincent Viegas, who was at that time a secular priest. Perez was to give him a copy of the deed by which the Bishop of Goa had assigned these buildings to the Society of Jesus forever, and he was to secure a receipt from Viegas acknowledging that he was only the caretaker of this property until it should be claimed by the Society. Perez was ordered on no account to listen to any entreaties to remain at Malacca, where he was only wasting time in an ungrateful town, quite unworthy of labors which would prove more useful elsewhere. If he thought proper, Perez might leave Brother Bernard to go on teaching the children catechism and grammar. The explanation of this unusual severity towards Malacca is given to Father

Barzeus. Francis told him that he was sending Perez and his brethren back to Goa, because the opposition of the Malaccans had been the cause of ruining the Chinese mission and had thereby prevented the increase of God's glory. Barzeus was to arrange with the Bishop of Goa about the excommunication of all those who by their antagonism had impeded the journey he had undertaken as papal nuncio. By this severe sentence Xavier hoped to make the Governor realise the gravity of his conduct, so that he might not repeat it; and he also intended that in future no one should venture to prevent missionaries of the Society of Jesus from going to the Moluccas, Japan, or China. Such a mark of infamy and shame as public excommunication might deter men who feared the world more than God.

Among the traders at Sancian Francis met Pedro Velho, a merchant whom he had known in Japan and to whom, in spite of his love of diversion and decided objection to the practice of mortification, he was much attached. When he advised Velho to take the discipline for the good of his soul, the latter rejoined that he preferred to give alms, which he often bestowed upon Francis for his poor. One day the Apostle, wanting three hundred crowns as a dowry for an orphan girl, applied to Velho, who was gambling and losing a great deal of money. For a joke Velho pretended to be annoyed, and said: "Father Francis, when a man is losing money, he is in no condition to give alms." "It is always in season to do good," replied the Saint, and Velho, as if to get rid of him,

said: "Here, take the key of the chest and all my money if you will, but leave me alone to play my game." The Saint took three hundred out of 40,000 crowns of gold. Later, counting his money, Velho found it intact and reproached Xavier for not using it. The Saint replied he had taken 300 crowns, and Velho said simply: "I swear to you, not one crown is wanting; but God forgive you, my meaning was to have shared the sum betwixt us, and I expected that of my 40,000 crowns you would at least have taken half." Seeing that he spoke sincerely, the Saint said: "Pedro, I promise you in the name of God that temporal goods shall never be wanting to you, and if misfortune should overtake you, your friends will assist you." He also promised him that he would know the hour of his death in advance. Velho now changed his life, living almost like a friar. One day he asked Francis how he was to know the hour of his death. The Saint replied: "When you find your wine bitter to the taste, you have but one day more to live." Velho lived to extreme old age. One day he found his wine taste bitter. Terror stricken, he called for more wine, which also tasted bitter. He made his friends taste it, who said it was excellent. Velho then related what Xavier had said to him, and made preparations, temporal and spiritual, for death, though he was still in perfect health. His friends tried to talk him out of his apprehension, but he gave orders for his funeral and invited them to be present, while he received the last Sacraments in the church, and lay down on his bier during the Mass for

the dead. When the priest sang the last words of the burial service, the old man, still alive, joined in the responses. But when Velho's servant at the close came to help his master off the bier, he found him dead,— a thing which amazed all who were present.<sup>5</sup>

### § 3. OPPOSITION OF THE PORTUGUESE

Francis Xavier is said to have delivered the island from tigers. One night he went out and, throwing holy water over some of these wild beasts, commanded them to leave Sancian. In his letters to Pereira, Perez, and Barzeus, the Apostle described the efforts he was making to get to Canton, which was only thirty miles away. The Portuguese merchants, fearing the interruption of their trade with the Chinese, as well as the danger threatening Xavier if he entered China, did their utmost to dissuade him from going thither, telling him of the severe laws against foreigners, etc. If he were discovered, he would be imprisoned, tortured, and killed. But, as he wrote to Father Perez, though everybody told him he might be landed on a desert isle, or be thrown overboard by the junk owner, or imprisoned and tortured by the governor, this did not scare him. But something else did — want of confidence in God when about to preach the Gospel to the Chinese. But, he added, as neither the devil nor his satellites could harm him without God's permission, he felt confident that all danger would vanish. "In any case, I will follow the voice which calls me, and obey my Lord. I count

<sup>5</sup> *Process.*, 1616, n. 20; Bartoli, IV, n. 17.

my life and liberty as nothing. 'He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life eternal.' " 6

The adverse representations of the traders and the refusal of many junk owners to run the risk of landing him at Canton, merely increased Xavier's determination to enter China. If not by Canton, he would go by way of Siam, whose king, he told Pereira, was sending an embassy to the Emperor at Peking. A merchant, Diego Vaz, an Arragonese, offered to take him to Siam in a junk which he had just purchased. Francis was inclined to accept this proposal, because by joining the Siamese envoys he could enter China in their train. He hoped that he might meet Pereira at the court of Peking, or at Canton, where he would probably be found in a prison.<sup>7</sup>

Francis made acquaintance with several Chinese merchants, who were pleased with his amiable manners and said they would be glad if he could come to their country, as they thought his books contained doctrines far superior to their own. Leaving no stone unturned to reach Canton, Francis at last found a junkman, who for two hundred piculs of pepper, provided by Pereira's agent Escandel, agreed to take him. He would land him from his vessel, keep him three or four days hidden in his house, and then at nightfall lead him out of Canton on the road to Peking, after which Francis would have to find his own way to the capital. The better to preserve secrecy,

6 John xii, 25.

7 *Mon. Xav.*, Ep. 137.

the junk-owner refused to embark Xavier at once, but proposed to return for him with only his sons and slaves on board, who would not betray him to the mandarins. On his part Francis undertook to bring the letters of the Viceroy and the Bishop of Goa to the Emperor, and also swore never to divulge how he had landed at Canton, nor by whom he had been assisted. To facilitate matters the Apostle now sent back to India the lay brother who was not suited for the Society, as his health had broken down. The catechist Antonio, who was a native of Canton, was ordered to cross over to that port on the pretext of seeing his family, and then to await his master's arrival.

In order not to be easily recognised by Chinamen, Francis removed into a hut on the side of the hill away from the harbor. As Antonio, to Xavier's great disappointment, could not speak the mandarin dialect, and had almost forgotten his own, the Apostle had much trouble finding an interpreter. At length a man applied who was acquainted with Chinese writing and literature. He could speak the mandarin dialect, and Father Bartoli remarks that he thought he would gain much honor and credit by bringing the Emperor a master of science, which was so highly esteemed in China. Once more, for the last time in his life, Francis' sanguine hopes rose, and he felt full of joy at the prospect of preaching the faith in the vast Empire whose coast line he could see in the distance across the sea.

Seriously alarmed, the Portuguese sent the most considerable of their members to implore Xavier, if

he would not take compassion on himself, at least to consider their wives and children. The Saint, ever careful for others, found an expedient, promising not to go to China till the Portuguese had finished their business and left Sancian. This plan would, moreover, give the Chinese merchants he had engaged time to make a short voyage. The Saint fell ill of a violent fever for fifteen days, which the Portuguese told him was a clear sign from God that he should not go on. But once recovered, he thought of nothing else and could think of nothing day and night but of converting China. He often walked along the shore, turning his eyes to China; and he said to friends that his only wish was to be set down at the gates of Canton, and that he would not trouble himself with what might happen afterwards.

The interpreter who had been willing to accompany the Apostle, frightened by the awful risk he would incur in taking Francis into China, now withdrew from his bargain. The Saint closed all his letters to have them forwarded by Portuguese ships returning to India. The last epistle he ever wrote was addressed to Fathers Barzeus and Perez, and it contained directions concerning the sentence of excommunication against the Governor of Malacca. He was still preparing for his journey to China. If the junkman did not fetch him, he meant to sail to Siam; and should this prove a failure, he would return to India. With God's help the snares of the devil would be frustrated, so that "by means of one so vile as I am, the glory of God will be all the greater, while

the demons will be confounded." He then reminded "Master Gaspard" (Barzeus) to obey his instructions and not to imagine, as others had done before, that he (Xavier) was dead and he (Barzeus) thereby released from his obedience. For he would not die before God willed it, although life was painful to him. Alvarez Ferreira was leaving Sancian, and Barzeus was not to receive him into the college again. If Ferreira wished to become a friar, Barzeus was to help him, but he must not receive him, as he was unsuitable for the Society of Jesus.<sup>8</sup>

#### § 4. FINAL ABANDONMENT BY THE PORTUGUESE

In the midst of all his efforts to accomplish his mission, Francis had a presentiment of his approaching death. It seems that before leaving Goa he said to a friend, "Let us hasten to work for God, so that we may meet in glory, for we shall never see each other again in this life." To Cosmo Anes, who asked when they should meet once more, Francis answered, "In the valley of Josaphat." At Sancian, in a conversation with six of his friends, he said, "My brethren, let us prepare to die well, for most of us will die during this year." Five were dead by the end of the year, including the Apostle himself.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Apparently Ferreira had no vocation to the religious life. Pages says that at Acheen, in 1565, Captain Alvarez Ferreira with four other countrymen was killed because he refused to deny Jesus Christ. This may have been the former lay brother of the Society, to whom God gave the opportunity of confessing his faith and gaining the martyr's palm.

<sup>9</sup> Michel, *Vie*, p. 417.



The Portuguese vessels at length quitted Sancian, taking Pereira's agent, Escandel, and other friends of the Saint, who were devoted to him. Leaving the *Santa Cruz*, which had not yet completed its lading, Francis remained alone in his poor cabin, which was open to all the vicissitudes of the weather and bare of even the necessities of life. But so ardent was the love of God in Xavier's heart, so eager was he to spread the Gospel in China, that he heeded neither hardship nor privation. His sole occupation was unceasing prayer, and he constantly offered his life to God for the Chinese mission, while looking out across the sea for the junk engaged to take him to Canton. But alarmed at the danger of bringing a foreigner into the country, the junk-owner never appeared at Sancian. To make matters worse, Francis was prostrated by an attack of fever, during which he was badly treated. He was even left without food by the cowardly crew of the *Santa Cruz*, who dreaded Dom Alvaro's vengeance did he hear on their return to Malacca that they had shown Father Xavier too much attention.

#### § 5. LAST HOURS AND DEATH OF THE SAINT

On Sunday, the 20th of November, the Saint celebrated Mass for the last time, and feeling extremely ill, returned to the ship, which was still at anchor, where he could procure remedies and nourishment. He told the pilot, Joam da Aguiar, that he knew the hour of his death was near. The sea being rough, the tossing of the vessel proved too much for the en-

feeble frame of the dying man, who was racked by a fearful headache. He asked to be put ashore, where a friend, George Alvarez, brought him into a shanty scarcely less exposed to wind and rain than the miserable cabin on shipboard. To relieve the acute pain in Francis' side, this man proposed to bleed him by opening a vein. This operation was performed twice, but so unskilfully as to bring on convulsions and nausea. Francis occasionally was delirious, but even then his words turned on spiritual subjects or on the voyage to China. He was unconscious for three days. Reviving, he uttered prayers and ejaculations. The Chinese catechist, Antonio, seems to have come back from Canton, for Bartoli, Dryden, and Michel mention his presence at the deathbed of the Saint. This man relates that Francis spoke loudly, as though preaching in a language he did not understand—probably his own Basque tongue—but by dint of continual repetition, Antonio was able to remember the Latin ejaculations: "*Jesu, Fili David, miserere mei—Monstra te esse Matrem—O Sanctissima Trinitas*"—his favorite aspirations. There seems also to have been an Indian servant, to whom Francis said sadly three times one day, "*Ay, triste de ti.*" These words were not understood at the time, but were explained later when this lad fell into evil courses and met with a sudden and violent end in a state of sin. No priest, no brother of the dearly loved Society of Jesus, was there to assist and console him who had soothed numberless others. He lay there perfectly alone,

visited now and then by some Portuguese from the *Santa Cruz*. Near him was the Chinese catechist, to remind him of the mission he was never to undertake in the heathen land for which he had sacrificed his life. He died as he had lived, in the utmost poverty — the virtue he passionately loved — totally dependent on the charity of the shipmaster for the few almonds which were now his sole food. He grew weaker day by day, but ever stronger burned the ardent desire to go to the Divine Master, for whose sake he had forsaken all, to follow Him on the road of the Cross, which must always be the path of true Apostolic workers. Having spent two days without food, Francis gave orders to send on board all his vestments, missals, and books. On Friday, November 2, 1552,<sup>10</sup> the dying Saint, with eyes full of tears, gazed at his crucifix, the companion of his missionary life, and slowly said aloud: "*In te Domine speravi, non confundar in æternum.*" These were the last words heard from those lips ever so eloquent in the service of God. At the hour of two in the afternoon a smile lit up the fever-worn face, and Francis Xavier quietly expired. He had prayed, fasted, preached, and labored for the greater glory of God. Now, at the comparatively early age of forty-six, he gained his crown from the Lord whom he loved and had served with all the fervor of his nature.

<sup>10</sup> On the date of St. Francis Xavier's death, which is controverted, see the critical examination which forms Appendix C of Father Brou's *St. François Xavier*, Vol. II, pp. 442-450.





CHAPEL OF THE TOMB FROM THE SEA  
*(Also Showing Pedestal of the Statue on the Hillside Behind)*

## § 6. FUNERAL, AND SUBSEQUENT REMOVAL OF THE REMAINS FROM SANCIAN

Hearing of his death, the Portuguese hastily landed and found Francis lying as though he were asleep; his face, now freshly colored, was stamped with a supernatural beauty, which so astonished them that they fell on their knees, kissing the hands which could never bless them again and imploring him to pray for them, for they felt that his soul was with God. With all this enthusiasm it is strange to relate that only four men attended the funeral. The catechist Antonio and the Portuguese Alvarez placed the corpse in a Chinese coffin, which they filled with quicklime, so as to be able to carry the bones back to India. No ceremony of any kind was held, and the coffin was laid in a grave at the foot of a cross standing near the harbor. Antonio and Alvarez each took as a relic a piece of Francis's worn-out soutane, while Aguiar obtained one of his shoes. So highly did he always prize this memento that he was later surnamed "*Aguiar de la zapata*,—Aguiar of the shoe." <sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Father Michel (*Vie*, pp. 500 sqq.) gives some interesting details respecting the first grave on the island where St. Francis died. After the body was taken away to India, the few Christians at Sancian and the Portuguese traders used to make pilgrimages to the first tomb of the Saint. Here in answer to their prayers, cures of illnesses and safety in perils were obtained by the invocation of St. Francis. Some sick sailors and passengers landing at Sancian came to the tomb, and throwing upon their heads a little of the dust from the empty grave, found themselves restored to health. Later the islanders, imagining

At the end of three months, the season being favorable for sailing, Antonio the catechist, the captain, and several friends of the dead Saint opened the tomb to see if the quicklime had done its work. They found the body fresh and entire, as though Francis were asleep. Even the vestments had not been injured. Among those present at the touching scene, the men who, as creatures of the Governor of Malacca, had been so brutal to the Apostle during his last days, wept aloud, begging his pardon for their conduct in

that the Portuguese had concealed a treasure beneath the monument, overturned it in their vain search. Nothing having been found, they filled up the grave but neglected to replace the stone, which had been erected in 1640 by the Jesuits. The people were punished for their avarice by a drought. With much remorse for their conduct they welcomed a Jesuit Father who, landing on the isle, at once with their help searched for and restored the monument to its former position. He said Mass the next day close to the grave, and rain set in, putting an end to the drought. Owing to various obstacles no church was built until 1700, and during the time occupied in its erection it was noticed that neither the Chinese soldiers on guard against pirates nor the workmen suffered from the great heat nor the want of rain and of provisions on the island. The Viceroy of Canton gave the Fathers a diploma insuring the protection of this monument to St. Francis. But when the Society of Jesus was suppressed, the church, like so many others in China, was let fall into ruins. It was repaired in 1813 by the Bishop of Macao, and the sepulchral stone was replaced upon the grave. Missionaries now occasionally visited Sancian, and a small Gothic chapel was built over the tomb and solemnly consecrated. According to Father Hornsby, who visited it in 1903, the sacred edifice is in good preservation, together with the statue of the Saint behind the high altar, about thirty feet high, although some globe trotters foolishly chipped off pieces of granite from the four corners as a souvenir.

hastening his death. They also heartily abused Dom Alvaro, who had given them such a bad example. Father Bartoli remarks that the Viceroy of Goa was right in saying that the Governor had been the means of killing Francis by the worry of his persecution and the cruelty of his underlings at Sancian.

The Portuguese took the coffin on board after refilling it with quicklime. The *Santa Cruz* sailed immediately and made a swift passage; though in the Singapore Strait it ran on a sandbank. The people having invoked Francis, the vessel slowly glided off into deep water. It was noticed that for some years the typhoons did not blow with their usual violence, as if Francis, who had suffered so much from them, now prayed in heaven that as he died on the threshold of China, those following him on that mission might have less trouble in going thither. Though plague and famine were raging, and Father Perez had left Malacca, crowds of heathen, Moslems, and Christians, together with Diego Pereira, the Vicar General, and the clergy hurried to the harbor. The *Santa Cruz* came up the river on the 22nd of March, having sent a boat ashore to say that the Apostle's coffin was on board. The coffin was reverently carried in procession through the city, past the Governor's house, where Dom Alvaro from a window spitefully abused the people and then resumed his gambling.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Michel differs from Bohours as to this incident, for he writes that Dom Alvaro was already in prison at Goa and could no longer suppress the esteem and veneration of the Malaccan population for the Saint. (*Vie*, Liv. V, ch. iv, p. 421.)



Slowly the procession ascended the road so often trodden by St. Francis, and thus his precious relics were brought to his beloved chapel of Our Lady of the Mount. The plague suddenly ceased, those already stricken were healed, while those who were well, escaped infection. Vessels now arrived bringing plenty of food to the starving citizens. They gratefully attributed these striking benefits to St. Francis, who even in death, came to succor them in their distress. The body was buried, without the coffin, near the altar of the church of Notre Dame de la Col-line.<sup>13</sup> As the grave dug for it in the rock was very narrow, the corpse was slightly bruised. It seemed, says a biographer, as if it were the destiny of this holy man to be ill-treated by the Malaccans even in death.

Five months later, in August, Father de Beira with two companions, *en route* to the Moluccas, reached Malacca. He insisted on opening the grave, and found the Apostle's body incorrupt, the head resting on a pillow, and a cloth over the face. Both were saturated with the blood from the face where it had been squeezed. Thus neither the quicklime at Sancian nor the excessive dampness of the Malacca sepulchre had exercised the least effect upon the remains. Father de Beira sent word to Pereira, who wrapped the body in rich brocade and placed it in a coffin of precious wood, in readiness for its removal to Goa at the next monsoon, now approaching.<sup>14</sup> Father de Beira pursued his journey to his mission in

<sup>13</sup> H. Valignano, in the *Mon. Xav.*, p. 195; Brou, II, 373.

<sup>14</sup> Cros, *Vie*, p. 364.

the Moluccas, while the coffin was left in the charge of Brother Manuel de Tavora,—an office shared by Father Pedro de Alcaçova on his return from Japan. Embarking on a ship, the two Jesuits departed to Goa with their precious freight. The vessel was extremely old and dilapidated, but it escaped shipwreck on a sandbank as well as storms on the voyage to Cochin.<sup>15</sup> There Father Perez, rector of the college, came on board with many people to venerate the remains. At Baticala a woman obtained a small piece of the brocade shrouding the body, and was healed of some disease. This relic effected cures of desperate cases of illness when applied to the sufferers.

#### § 7. ARRIVAL OF THE RELICS AT GOA

When the Viceroy at Goa heard that the ship was at Baticala, he sent a swift galley with Father Nunez, rector of Santa Fè College, and several other Fathers and students, who carried the coffin ashore and placed it for the night in a chapel at Ribendar, a place not many miles distant from Goa. The next morning a state entrance into the city was organised, and, escorted by boats full of nobles and notables, the coffin was taken into the harbor. At the quay it was received by the Viceroy, the cathedral chapter (Bishop Albuerquerque had died Feb. 18, 1553), the clergy and many people. Salutes were fired from all the ships as the remains were landed. The seminarists, the Confraternity of the Misericordia, and bands of children chanted

<sup>15</sup> *Process.*, 1556, Goa, n. 12; Malacca, n. 2; Lucena, *Historia da Vida do P. F. de Xavier*, Lisbon, 1600, X, ch. xxix, p. 905.

the psalm "*Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel*," as in procession they walked in front of the bier, which was carried by Fathers of the College. Behind them came the Viceroy, magistrates, the nobility, and people marching through the streets, where the guards could scarcely force a passage for the procession through the crowds. From windows and roofs wreaths of roses were thrown upon the coffin. As the people swept upwards to the church of the Jesuit college, many cures took place, including that of Doña Juana de Pereira, who upon invoking St. Francis, found herself restored to health after a dangerous illness of two months.

It was said that never perhaps were the praises of one man expressed in so many diverse languages as on that day. For three days and as many nights the dead Saint lay in state, exposed to the sight of the people. On Good Friday the canons of the cathedral came to chant the Mass of the Presanctified beside the bier. On Holy Saturday the Friars Minor sang Mass at the high altar, where Francis had so often celebrated the holy Sacrifice. During the following night the Fathers of the Society deposited the body of their late Provincial near the high altar in a sepulchre hallowed in the sanctuary wall.<sup>16</sup> Here it rested until the new church of the Bom Jesus was finished, when St. Francis Xavier's coffin was removed to another shrine in the novitiate chapel.

The Bom Jesus Church was built in 1559 by Dom Pedro de Mascarenhas. It has a large nave and

<sup>16</sup> *Process.*, 1556, Cochin, n. 3 sq.

two transepts. At one end of these is an altar of St. Francis Xavier, and at the other one of St. Francis Borgia. The high altar is dedicated to St. Ignatius, who is represented by a colossal statue. The altars are all beautifully decorated and the gilding is well preserved. Behind the chapel of St. Francis Xavier is the celebrated shrine raised to his memory by the Grand Duke of Tuscany, 1665. It can be seen through a large grating in artistically wrought gilt bronze. The monument is of white marble, having at each side space wide enough for an altar. The second tier of the monument placed upon the marble base, has in the middle bronze bas-reliefs representing the Saint baptising infidels on one side, while on the other he is shown preaching. On the third side he is depicted dying, abandoned at Sancian in view of China. On the third tier of the now tapering monument is the magnificent silver shrine containing the Saint's body and small panes of glass set between the small columns.<sup>17</sup>

The people did not wait for the canonization of Francis to venerate him as their protector. Even the Mohammedans imitated the Christians in their profound respect for his memory, for we are told that the King of Travancore erected a temple in honor of the Apostle of India. The pagans considered any oath taken in the Saint's name as sacred and never to be broken on any pretext. In Japan the house inhabited by St. Francis at Yamaguchi was set aside as a holy place, and a stone on which he often stood

<sup>17</sup> Michel, *Vie*, pp. 515 sq.

while preaching, was carefully preserved. Indeed his name and fame were spread by the Mohammedans as far as Africa, where a missionary heard the infidels speak of Francis Xavier with much reverence. Another of his biographers wrote that the infidels came long distances to kneel at the Saint's tomb, imploring his intercession as they raised their hands in "salaam," calling him the Great Father, Master of Miracles. This conduct was rendered more remarkable by the fact that these pagans and Moslems disliked the Christian religion even while they respected the memory of St. Francis. Striking cures were wrought at the shrine of the Apostle of the Indies. In one town he appeared to a blind pagan leper in his sleep and told him to go to his shrine to obtain a cure. The leper did as he was told, and during a novena made before the picture of the Saint over the altar, found himself healed of his terrible disease, and in possession of his sight, upon which he hastened to become a Christian. Another leper, having confidence in St. Francis, anointed his poor afflicted body with oil from a lamp burning before the Saint's picture and was suddenly healed. The oil failing, it was replaced by water, when to the general surprise the lamp continued burning just the same and numerous miracles were effected as in the case just mentioned.<sup>18</sup>

When John III heard of Francis' death, he ordered the Viceroy to collect all the details of his prophecies and miracles, and to examine the witnesses on oath, which was done at Goa, Baçaim, Cochin, and

<sup>18</sup> Michel, *Vie*, p. 480.

Malacca. Not long after the Apostle's burial there came a letter from St. Ignatius recalling him to Rome. But Francis had always known that the next meeting with "the Father of his soul" was to be before the Divine Master, whom they both loved and served in this world with such whole-hearted devotion. The bull of beatification was issued by Pope Paul V, 1610, and that of canonization, drawn up in the pontificate of Gregory XV, was published by Urban VIII, August 6th, 1623.

#### § 8. SUBSEQUENT EXAMINATION OF THE RELICS

In 1784 a rumor arose that the remains of St. Francis Xavier had been carried away. The shrine was opened by the Bishop of Cochin, acting for the Archbishop of Goa, in the presence of the Viceroy, nobles, judges, magistrates, clergy, etc., in the Church of the Bom Jesus. The feet and hands were found to be incorrupt although the former had the skin blackened, probably from exposure to the sun during the Saint's life. The left arm and hand rested on his breast, the right one having been sent to Rome by order of Father Aquaviva, General of the Society of Jesus, in 1615. The head and features were intact, though dried up since the amputation of the right arm, which is enshrined at the Gesù in Rome. The vestments were still quite fresh. The body seemed to be that of a very short man. A crystal shrine was prepared for the coffin, which was closed at the end of three days, after thousands had once more gazed upon the earthly remains of the Apostle of the Indies.

The shrine was enclosed in a marble tomb locked by eight keys, kept by the Governor General, the Archbishop, and other persons appointed to this charge. And there to this day has rested undisturbed the body of St. Francis Xavier.

Although a much decayed city of the dead, its ruin being caused by a new town built not far away, still everything is unchanged in the church of the Bom Jesus. Every year pilgrims are seen kneeling at the shrine of the loving son of St. Ignatius, who rightly has been termed the St. Paul of India and the East, while to the Society of Jesus St. Francis Xavier has been as "a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of God." <sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Isaias lxii, 3.

## APPENDIX

### CONVERSIONS AND MIRACLES

Father Brou, in Appendices A and B of his *Saint François Xavier* (Paris, 1912), which, as we have noted, is now the standard biography of the Saint, deals at some length, in the light of recent researches, with the probable number of conversions brought about by St. Francis and the authenticity of the innumerable miracles attributed to him.

As to the former he says that we have no means of knowing how many converts the Saint baptized at Goa, Cochin, Malacca, etc. At Travancore, we know from one of his own letters that he received ten thousand pagans into the Church in one month.<sup>1</sup> Throughout the entire mission of Comorin, including Travancore, there lived, at his departure, about 30,000 Christians, of whom, however, a number had been baptized by his predecessor. In the Moluccas he found an indigenous Christian population of which we do not know the exact number. Our knowledge of conditions in the other missions is equally fragmentary and uncertain, so that it is impossible to answer the question regarding the number of Xavier's converts. Father Brou, after stating these facts, adds that those who have exaggerated the number beyond measure have done a poor service to the Apostle's memory, as they have made it possible for his critics to say that

<sup>1</sup> *Mon. Xav.*, p. 371.



his work was ephemeral: "What had become of those *multa centena hominum millia* conquered by him, towards 1580 or 1600?"

The miracles ascribed to St. Francis Xavier were rejected by Protestants and infidels. Of late years they have been subjected to a more sober investigation. A new school of anti-Catholic writers prefers to ascribe them to "legendary evolution." They are not history, we are told, but popular legends. This, as English and American readers need hardly be reminded, is the contention of Dr. Andrew D. White. Father Brou points out that this thesis is untenable in view of the evidence embodied in the *Processus* of 1556 and 1616, which is contemporary, detailed, and manifestly trustworthy. The witnesses declare under oath what they have themselves seen and heard or received from trustworthy witnesses. Thus Xavier's reputation as a wonder worker is anterior to any possible "legendary evolution." If his miracles have been magnified and multiplied beyond measure, it was done not so much by the witnesses of 1556 and 1616 as by biographers and panegyrists who interpreted the contemporary documents with more enthusiasm than scholarship. This fact, however, was not left for modern infidel critics to discover, but was pointed out long ago by Catholic writers belonging to Xavier's own order, notably Valignano and Texeira.

In conclusion Father Brou emphasizes the distinction, too often overlooked, between miracles wrought during a saint's lifetime and after his death. "The miracles that are accepted as proof in the process of

canonization," he says, "the miracles which make it possible to affirm that the person who performed them is in Heaven, are those wrought after death (*miracles posthumes*). These can be easily and critically studied. It is otherwise with the miracles related in the life of St. Francis Xavier. They occurred in circumstances which make a critical examination impossible. Even the consultors of the Roman Congregations could do no more than establish the fact that two or three witnesses told the same story. From this concordant testimony they concluded that the facts were true. Should we not do the same if there were question of other than miraculous occurrences? Hence we are constrained to draw a twofold practical conclusion. In the first place we must not entirely reject any miracle attested in the canonical processes, unless it is clearly disproved. If we find one that is evidently spurious (which is not often the case), we must not allow ourselves to be disconcerted by the objection that the alleged miracle was accepted by the Roman examiners and perhaps even embodied in a papal Bull. In the second place we must take the miracles not as they appear in the biographies, but as they are described in the canonical processes of 1556 and 1616, thus leaving to each witness the responsibility for his story and his oath."



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